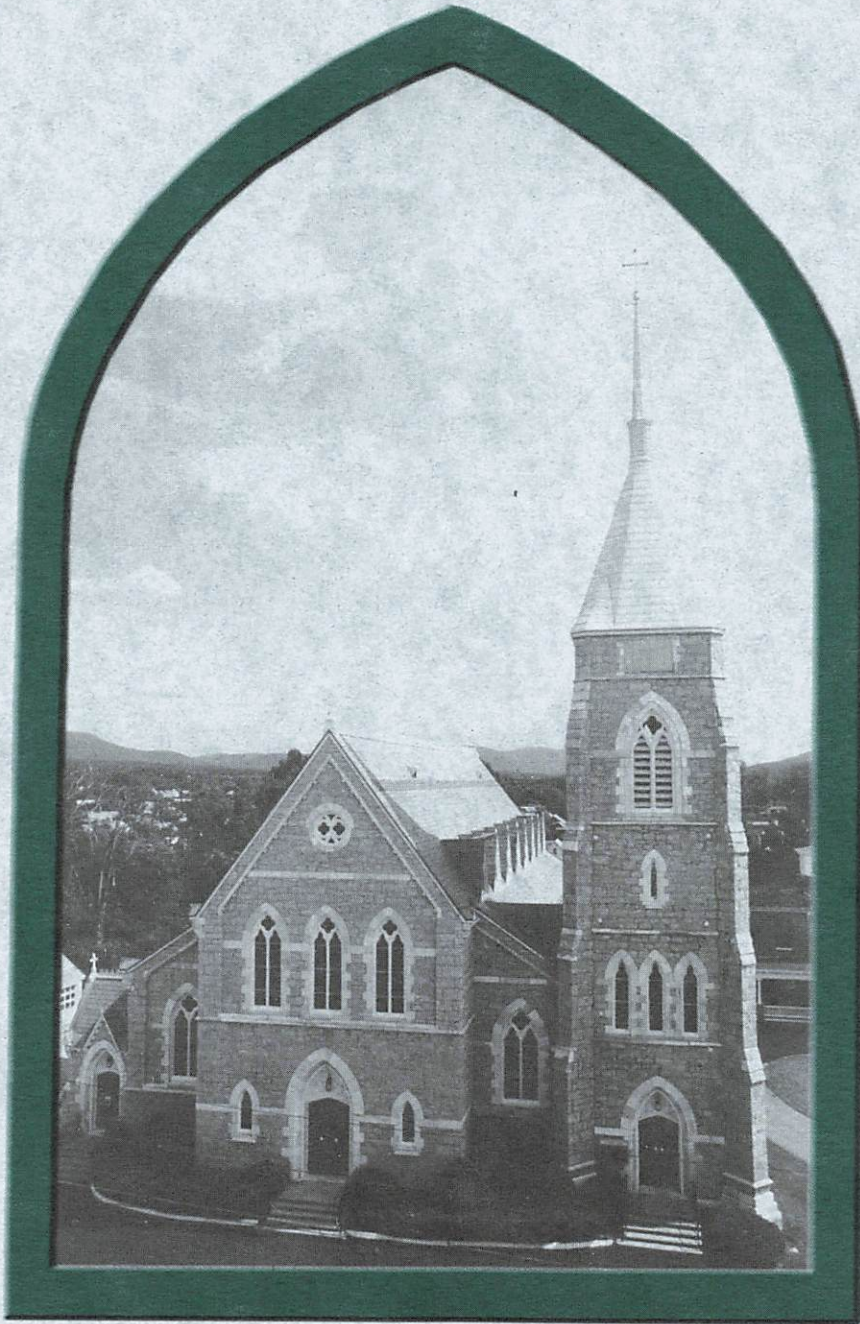


# “home”



## A History of St. Peter's Parish Rutland, Vermont

by Patrick T. Hannon







**“home”**

**A History of St. Peter's Parish  
Rutland, Vermont**

by Patrick T. Hannon

edited by Jim and Helen Davidson

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## Editors' Preface

It is through ordinary men and women, whether the priest at the altar or the person in the pew, that we are able to find the Lord Jesus. Although the human family spans the globe, it is in that unique and intimate interrelationship that we call the parish family that we work out our eternal salvation, day by day. It is in these frequent, and oft repeated, simple little interactions that an almost imperceptible, yet real and permanent, change takes place. We are not what we were yesterday.

This extended family life is what parish family is all about. Parish family has a "home" and that is where our hearts attain the peace that Christ wills for all. This earthly home is only a precursor to our eternal, heavenly home but it is the pledge of hope that leads to faith, which blossoms in love. Whether born and baptized in the parish or the most recent newcomer, for each there is that quality of "home" that makes the parish of St. Peter special.

May God welcome you to this "home" here in this life and to His eternal "home" in the next life.

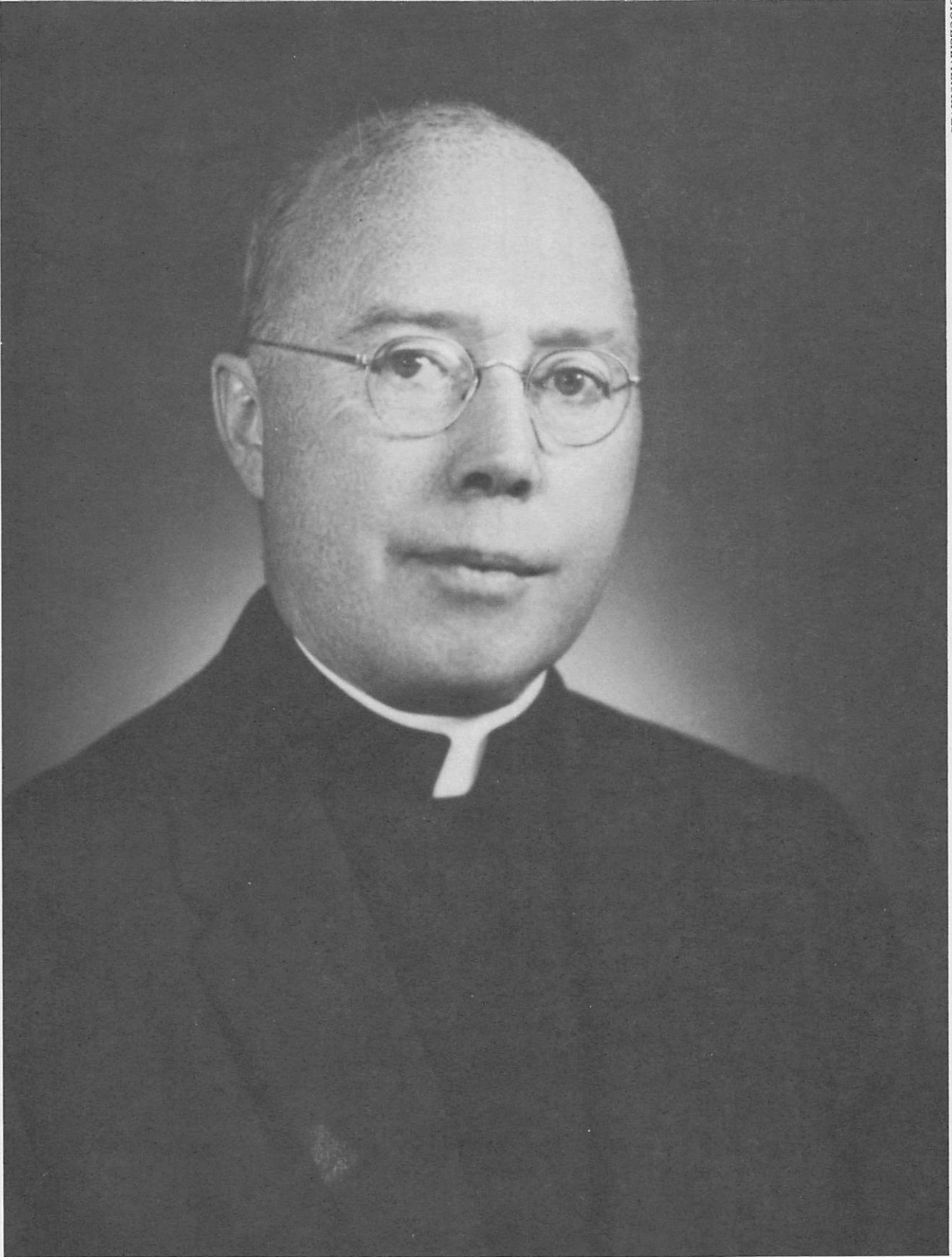
Father Patrick T. Hannon was one of those fortunate enough to be born, baptized and to go home to God from this parish. In his lifetime his love of this "home" led him to devote untold hours to retrieving the pieces of parish history to contribute to this heritage. For over twenty-five years this work has remained in hand-written and typescript forms except for some brief summaries.

The editors have supplied the usual editorial role of correcting typographical and human errors and slightly reorganizing material. They have attempted to respect the author's work while trying to bring it to the reader in the best possible form. The editors have added a brief final chapter to cover the last twenty-five years. May those who share this "home," help to share its heritage with all.

Thank you, Father Hannon.

Jim and Helen Davidson





*Father Patrick T. Hannon, the author, died in 1984.*



### Author's Preface

Because in 1973 St. Peter's Parish will be celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the dedication of the present church, and because the writer is a native son of St. Peter's, this attempt of its history was written. It is a tribute to its former pastors and to the staunch self-sacrificing parishioners who made this history. It should be recorded not only for the edification of the present parishioners and friends of St. Peter's, but also for the future.

The writer acknowledges that it is far from perfect. But since it is the first attempt of a history of this parish, your kind indulgence is asked for any errors or omissions that have been made.

Acknowledgement should be given to the Rutland City Clerk, Mr. John Barrett, and his staff; to the staff of the Rutland Free Library; to the Chancery Office; to the Cathedral; to St. Michael's College; and to the Vermont State Library for their kindnesses to me when I used their facilities and sources while researching this work.

Feast of St. Bernard  
August 20, 1970



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## Sowing the Seed

The complex of buildings on the corner of Meadow Street and Convent Avenue make it difficult to envision the day when none of them existed. Today there are St. Peter's Church, Rectory, and Parish Center; Mt. St. Joseph Assisted Living Residence and Academy and the Loretto Home. The limits of St. Peter's Parish as they are today – the western section of the city of Rutland and Center Rutland – make it difficult to realize that this parish was not always so circumscribed.

The numbers of people now pouring out of the church after Sunday Masses also make it difficult to visualize the day when only a few Catholic families resided in Rutland.

In 1761 when the town of Rutland was chartered, it consisted of what is now the City of Rutland as well as the towns of Rutland, West Rutland and the village of Sutherland Falls (now Proctor). The first settlers of this town were former residents of Connecticut and Massachusetts. Their religion was Protestant, mainly Congregational. Little villages grew up in both the east and west sides of the town. The first church was built in the center of the town in 1774, but several years later, in 1784, another Congregational church was built on what is now Main Street. In 1787 the parishes were divided, hence the terms, "Rutland, East Parish" (or East Rutland) and, "Rutland, West Parish" (or West Rutland).

It is difficult to ascertain who were the first Catholic settlers of Rutland. There were non-Catholic families bearing the distinctly Celtic and Catholic names of Kelley, Gleason, Butler, Barrett, etc. whose ancestors came here in the 1790's and 1800's and who might have been Catholics. Among those who brought the faith here, and whose descendants still retain it, were the Lystons, McMahons, Cliffords, Fitzgeralds, Kelleys, Brohans, Burns, etc. – the first named two families coming here in the 1820's and the others coming later.<sup>1</sup>

But what caused this Irish immigration? Without going into detail, it is safe to say that economic and financial conditions in Ireland at that time were the cause. During the years 1815 to 1830, the population of Ireland grew to such an extent [8 or 9 million people] that agricultural Ireland could not support its people. The English landlords divided and subdivided their rented lands so that the Irish tenants could not make a living off their small plots. In some areas the potato [the main staple of the diet] failed so that the people were on the verge of starvation. Anxious for their lands to make money, the English landlords let their lands out for sheep grazing, thus reducing the land on which the potato could be grown. As a result of these and other conditions, poverty existed in Ireland.<sup>2</sup>

In the late 1700's, the first immigrants were from Protestant Ulster. They were small farmers and not paupers. They brought some money with them and hoped to better their lot. As the years went by and fares were cheap, many others left Ireland for America to improve their lot. Some of these people came to this area where they settled on farms in Shrewsbury, Tinmouth, Wallingford, Rutland, etc. Others found work in the iron works in Pittsford. This minor immigration continued into the 1840's.<sup>3</sup>

When the diocese of Boston was formed in 1808, it included all of New England



which included Vermont. Owing to the slow but steady increase in the Catholic population in Vermont, Bishop Benedict Fenwick of Boston decided to send a priest to Vermont as soon as one was available. On a visit to New York, he was approached by the Rev. Jeremiah O'Callaghan who asked for work in the bishop's diocese. On July 6, 1830, Bishop Fenwick sent him to work in Vermont and to have his headquarters in Burlington where there were about 100 Catholics.

Western Vermont was the richer and better settled half of the state. It was dotted with small Catholic settlements with usually not more than a score or two of persons. Such was the zeal of Father O'Callaghan that he visited the Catholics in Vergennes, Middlebury, Pittsford, Rutland, Castleton, Wallingford, and Bennington and offered Mass in these places.

"Father O'Callaghan was the first priest to visit Rutland. He came here in 1830 and said the first Mass in a private home, for at that time it could not have been deemed necessary, if possible, to rent a hall for such a purpose. In 1830 there were not more than five or six families, or about 25 to 30 souls in this place. Father O'Callaghan continued his visits until about 1837."<sup>4</sup> He traveled by stagecoach, horse and buggy, or by horseback. How often did he come here? He was probably able to visit this area four or five times a year.

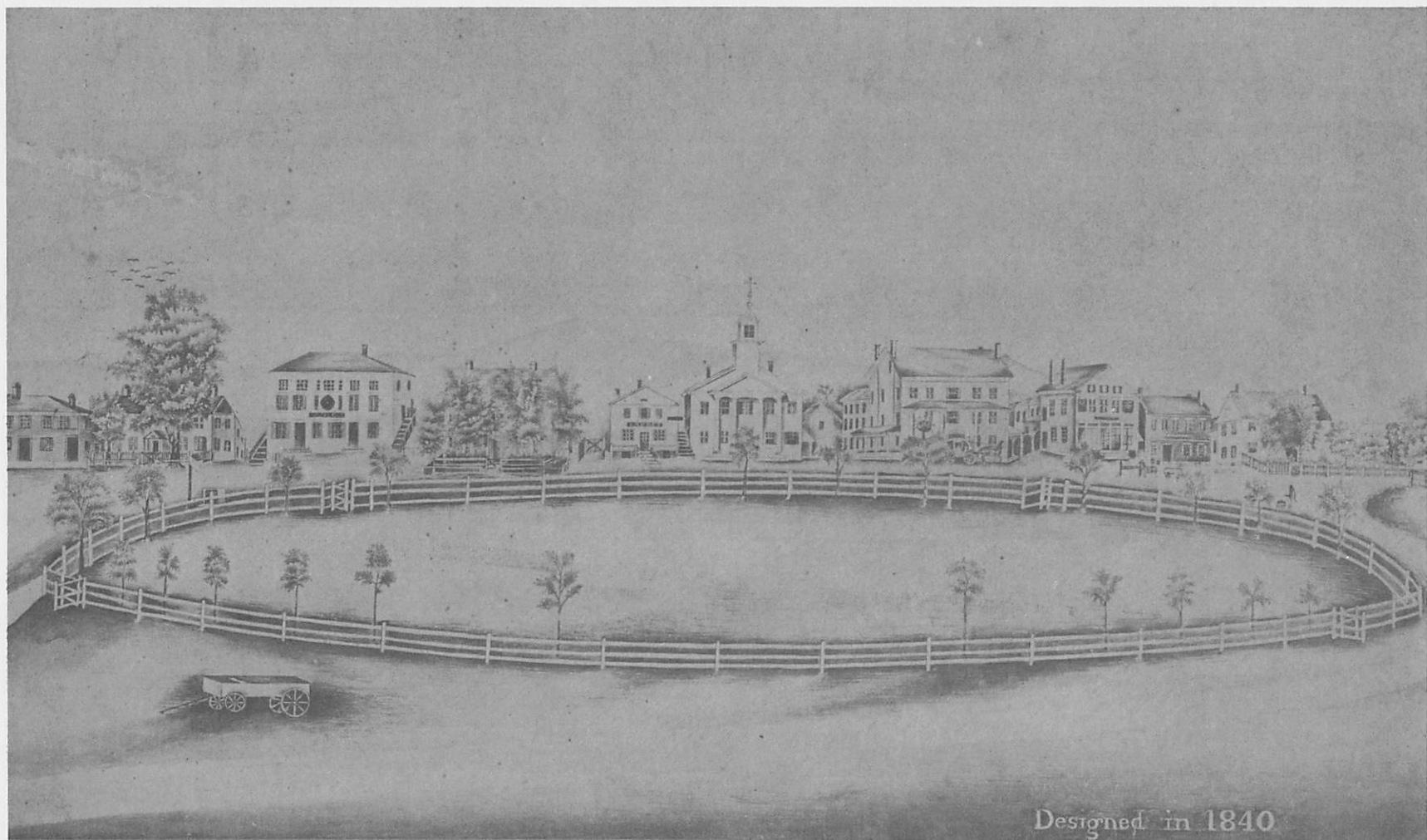
Father O'Callaghan was 50 years old when he began his missionary labors in Vermont. Bishop Fenwick, aware of the toll that incessant travel and advanced age would take on a man, had sent him assistants, but none of them remained here very long. Occasionally a priest from Albany would make the circuit through southwestern Vermont. Father O'Callaghan "organized little congregations at, and periodically visited, St. Albans, Swanton, Fairfield, Montpelier, St. Johnsbury, Vergennes, Middlebury, Brandon, Pittsford, Rutland, Castleton, Poultney, Tinmouth, Wallingford, Dorset and Bennington. His apostolic forays frequently carried him into northern New York as well as into western Massachusetts [North Adams and Pittsfield]."<sup>5</sup>

But in 1837, the Bishop found another priest with a zeal similar to Father O'Callaghan's. He was the Rev. John B. Daly, a Franciscan priest, just received into the Boston diocese. He was sent to help Father O'Callaghan and, between them, they divided the state of Vermont; Father O'Callaghan taking the northern counties of Chittenden, Franklin, Orleans, Essex, Lamoille, Caledonia, Washington, and Orange; while Father Daly had charge of the southern counties of Addison, Rutland, Bennington, Windsor, and Windham. In 1847, Father George Hamilton, a priest of the St. Louis, Missouri, diocese was given charge of St. Albans and the northern counties, leaving Father O'Callaghan with Chittenden, Washington and Orange counties.<sup>6</sup>

With Middlebury as his headquarters, Father Daly visited all the southern missions of Father O'Callaghan. In 1840 he listed 27 missions in three states. He added to those already established: Manchester, Bellows Falls, Plymouth, Norwich, Windsor, and Woodstock in Vermont. In western Massachusetts, Greenfield was added to the list; and in New Hampshire, he visited Claremont, Cornish, Charlestown, Lebanon, Hanover and Keene. In 1839-1840 he built a brick church in Middlebury.<sup>7</sup> In the late 1840's Father Daly added the following to his list of missions: Ludlow, Brattleboro, Arlington, Northfield and Rockingham.<sup>8</sup>

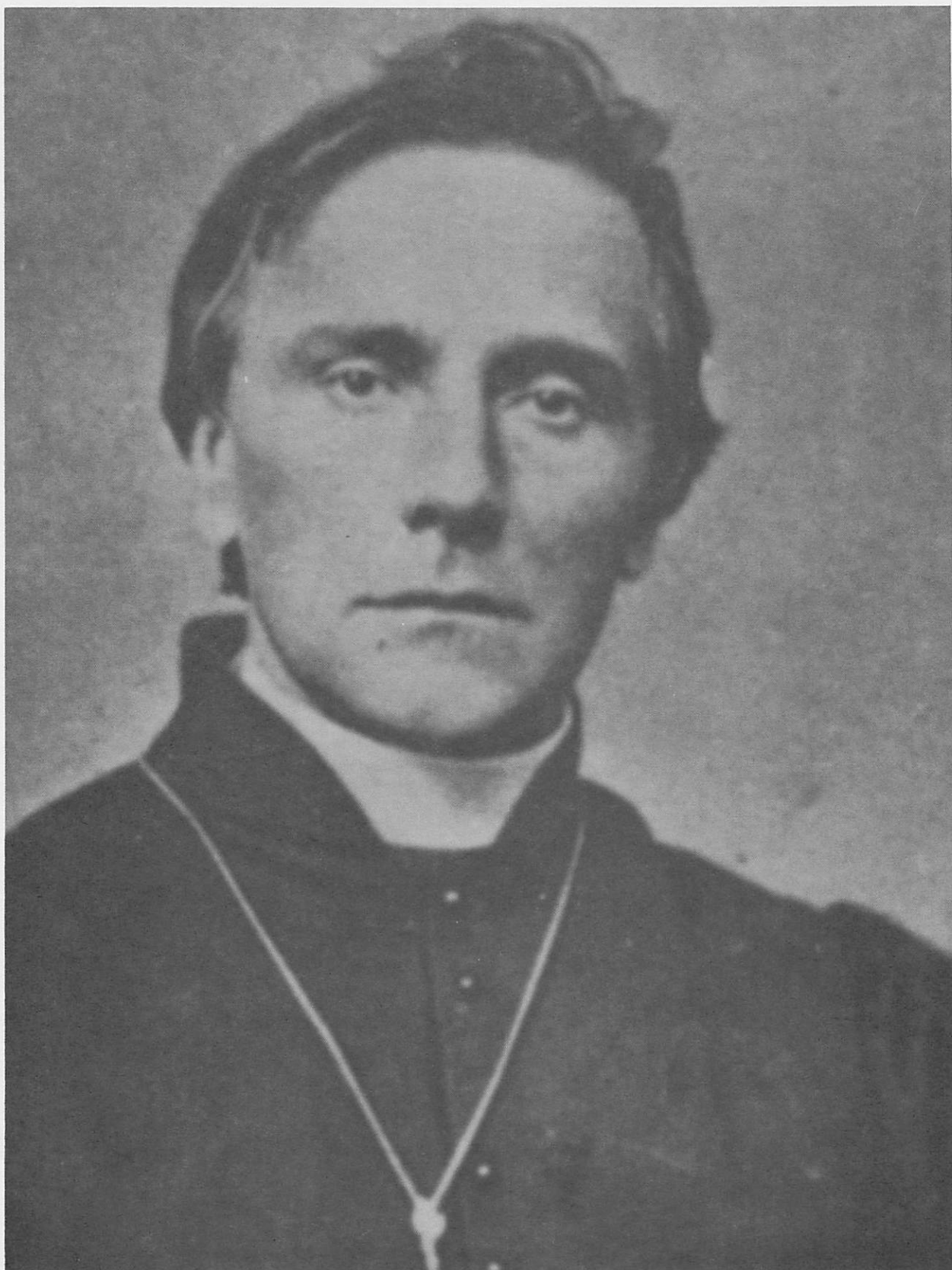
Whereas there were about 1,000 Catholics in Vermont in 1830, by 1843, the





*In 1840 a Miss Hale designed a painting of Main Street Park and the buildings to the east. At that time this was the business center of Rutland. Miss Hale's work was preserved in this photograph. The location of the original painting is unknown. The courthouse, where Mass was offered, is the building with the tower in the center. The Post Office is on the left and the Franklin House is on the right.*





*Bishop Louis DeGoesbriand was the first bishop of the Burlington Diocese.*



number had grown to 4,940. In this latter year in Father Daly's area, there were about 500 Catholics in Middlebury, 150 in Castleton, 400 between the towns of Brandon, Pittsford, Rutland, Shrewsbury and Wallingford, 150 in Bennington, and 400 between Woodstock, Windsor, Plymouth and Rockingham.<sup>9</sup> At this time in East Rutland there were only about 100 dwellings and 13 stores.

These priests received no salary or stipends. Their livelihood depended on the free will offerings made in church on three times a year - Christmas, Easter and summer.<sup>10</sup> Father Daly visited Rutland about once a month. As the congregation increased beyond the capacity of a private house, he offered Mass in a building known as "Ball Alley" on Main Street and in 1853 in the Old Courthouse, also on Main Street.<sup>11</sup>

Hemenway in her *Historical Gazeteer of Vermont*, under the heading "Methodists" remarks that the Methodists of East Rutland tried to rent the Courthouse for divine services, but were turned down because "The Romanists" were using it at the very hour that they desired to use it.<sup>12</sup>

The Catholic population slowly increased in Rutland. After the failure of the potato crop in Ireland in 1846, tens of thousands of Irish men and women immigrated to Canada and to this country, landing in Quebec, Boston and New York and other ports. The potato blight also affected other crops - wheat, oats, turnips, beans, etc. The results were appalling. Disease and starvation caused deaths everywhere.

The exodus from Ireland included all classes - farmers, tradesmen, and shopkeepers. Although most of them stayed in Boston or New York in Irish neighborhoods, a number ventured west and north. In June 1847, Burlington felt the influx of these unfortunates. House after house was crowded with those who were stricken with ship fever. No doubt other towns in Vermont experienced a similar influx.<sup>13</sup>

In 1848, the construction of railroads began in Vermont. The laborers on these were mostly Irish, hired in gangs by the builders. Since Rutland was a railroad center many of these men settled in Rutland after the construction was over and worked for the railroads at various jobs, or in the machine shops, or the marble industry, which began to boom in the 1850's. French Canadians, who had settled in northern Vermont earlier, now began to come into Rutland County although in smaller numbers. By 1853, there were 20,000 Catholics in Vermont.

On July 25, 1853, the Holy See founded the diocese of Burlington, as a suffragan diocese of the Archdiocese of New York. It remained so until May 2, 1875, at which date it became a suffragan of the newly created Archdiocese of Boston.<sup>14</sup>

The new diocese comprised the whole state of Vermont. Father Louis DeGoesbriand, the chancellor of the Diocese of Cleveland, Ohio, was appointed as its first bishop. He was consecrated by Cardinal Bedini, the Nuncio to Brazil, on October 30, 1853, in the Cathedral in New York City. He traveled by train to Boston where he was met by Bishop John B. Fitzpatrick who accompanied him on the trip to Burlington. In Rutland they were joined by Father Daly. On Sunday November 6, 1853, Bishop DeGoesbriand was formally installed as the first Bishop of Burlington.<sup>15</sup>

At this time there were only three churches in southern Vermont - Middlebury, Castleton, and Brandon - and Father Daly was the only priest in the area.



## Chapter 1 Sowing the Seed

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- <sup>1</sup> *History of the Catholic Church, The New England States*, Vol. II, p. 547
- <sup>2</sup> C. Woodham Smith, *The Great Hunger*, Chapter XI
- <sup>3</sup> *History of the Archdiocese of Boston*, Vol. II, p. 106
- <sup>4</sup> *History of the Catholic Church, The New England States*, Vol. II, p. 547
- <sup>5</sup> *History of the Archdiocese of Boston*, Vol. II, p. 147
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibid* p. 570
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid* pp. 277-278
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid* p. 572
- <sup>9</sup> Thompson, *History of Vermont*, 1842, pp. 201-202
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>11</sup> *History of the Catholic Church, The New England States*, Vol. II, p. 547
- <sup>12</sup> Hemenway, *Historical Gazeteer*, Vol. III, p. 1048
- <sup>13</sup> *History of the Archdiocese of Boston*, Vol. II, p. 570
- <sup>14</sup> Bishop DeGoesbriand's Diary
- <sup>15</sup> *Centenary Booklet of the Diocese of Burlington*



### The Seed Flourishes

When Burlington was erected as a diocese and Bishop DeGoesbriand was installed as its first bishop, there were only ten churches, five priests, and 20,000 Catholics within its borders.<sup>1</sup> To become acquainted with his new diocese, the Bishop began to visit the various churches and settlements of Catholics in the state, often offering Mass and preaching to the congregation.<sup>2</sup> No doubt, Father Daly accompanied his bishop on his rounds of southern Vermont. The town of Rutland was visited on December 3, 1853, less than one month after the Bishop had passed through town on his way to Burlington for his installation.

By the end of 1854, the Episcopal visits were completed. The Bishop saw the need for more priests to work in this portion of the Lord's vineyard. Since most of the Catholics were either of Irish descent or of French descent, he decided to go to Ireland and France to visit the seminaries to recruit young men for Vermont. Four priests and five seminarians answered his call.<sup>3</sup>

After his return from Europe in 1855, the first diocesan synod was held in October. "This little band of missionaries is animated with a truly apostolic spirit." Eleven were present at this synod.<sup>4</sup> In order to guide them and to unify his diocese, the Bishop urged his priests to have triduums and retreats among the parishes and Catholic settlements. A yearly priest's retreat began and clergy conferences were held at the Bishop's house at least twice a year. In 1861, all priests were given permission to offer two Masses on Sundays and Holy Days. In 1865, the salary of the priests was set.<sup>5</sup> Other visits to Ireland and France were made to recruit priests for the diocese. Thus their number grew.

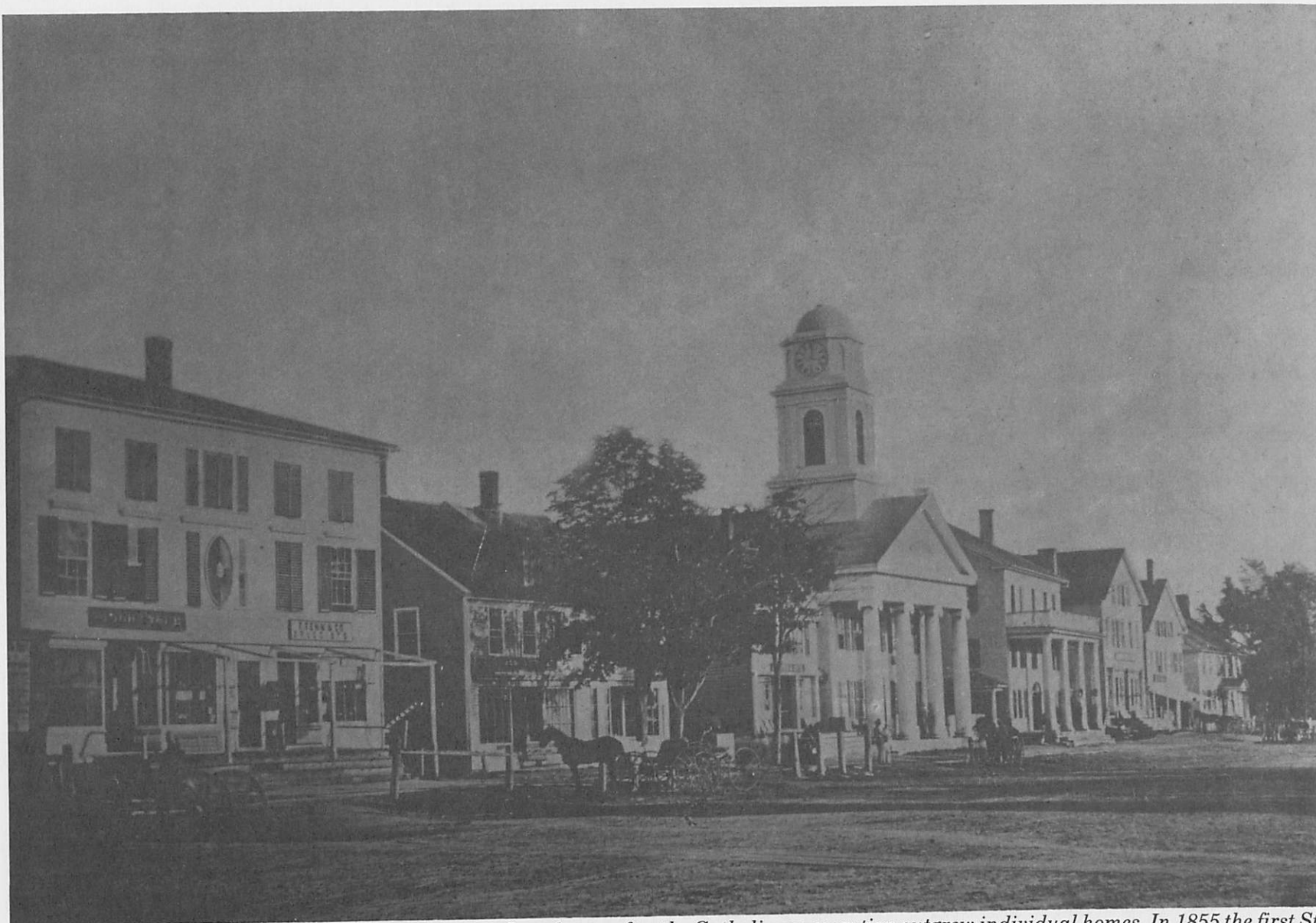
Father Daly continued to visit Rutland and the other missions of southern Vermont for about one year after the Bishop's arrival. East Rutland received a monthly visit with Mass in the Old Courthouse on Main Street.<sup>6</sup> But, finally, after 17 years of incessant travels to his various missions, Father Daly requested from the Bishop to retire. His request was granted on October 4, 1854. To replace him, Father Zephyrin Druon was sent to Rutland in November 1854. He had been stationed in Bennington since January 6, 1854.<sup>7</sup>

During the first year of Father Druon's pastorate his routine was the same as Father Daly's. Mass was offered in Rutland once a month and visits were made to the other Catholic settlements during the month. However, the Catholics of East Rutland needed a church of their own. One source said that, at this time, they numbered in the hundreds.<sup>8</sup> Another source reported that there were about 500 Catholics in Rutland.<sup>9</sup> The Methodists tried to rent the Old Courthouse but they were told that the Catholics were using it at the same hour that they desired to use it.<sup>10</sup>

A plot of land on Meadow Street, owned by John Cain, became available. On May 4, 1855, Father Druon bought this parcel of land for \$125.00.<sup>11</sup> In the same year he built a red brick edifice on this lot.<sup>12</sup>

Father Druon's next concern was the education of the children of the parish. On November 10, 1855, he bought a house lot from Frederick Chaffee for \$500.00. This was located on West Street, opposite the entrance to Meadow Street [now 273 West





*In the 1850's Mass was offered in the Rutland County Courthouse after the Catholic congregation outgrew individual homes. In 1855 the first St. Peter's Church was built on Meadow Street.*



Street].<sup>13</sup> This school evidently opened its doors to about 50 pupils in 1856.<sup>14</sup>

For the first year that Father Druon was the pastor of St. Peter's Parish he carried on the work in his extensive parish by himself. But, in October 1855, following the first Synod, the Rev. Francis Picart became an assistant in the parish.<sup>15</sup> A rectory, a residence for the priests, became a necessity. With the appointment of Father Charles O'Reilly to Brattleboro in October 1855, the southeast portion of the diocese ceased to be part of St. Peter's charge. This significantly reduced the workload for the priests at St. Peter's. On May 1, 1856, Father Druon bought a house lot on Meadow Street from Albert and Eleanor Bean for \$870.00.<sup>16</sup> [This house would now be 21 Meadow Street.]

At this time, money was a scarce commodity to the small number of parishioners. Money to pay for these land purchases was not on hand. And so mortgages had to be taken out on all these properties. These were eventually paid up. But, these first years were difficult ones for the Catholics of St. Peter's Parish and for its pastor. Well could the author of *The Life and Memoirs of Rev. Charles J. Boylan*, P. Francis Madigan, refer to it as "the then small and struggling Catholic Parish."<sup>17</sup> Father Thomas J. Lynch in his eulogy at the funeral of Father Boylan stated that "the prospects of the Rutland parish were not flattering when Father Boylan took charge of it."<sup>18</sup>

The Annual Parish reports from 1857 to 1865 record the pew rent for the year at about \$600.00. In 1857, donations to the parish amounted to \$417.00. In 1859 a special collection to pay the debt amounted to \$489.00. From 1865 to 1870, the pew rent rose from \$850.00 to \$1,600.00. [Pew rent was a system of church support whereby a family rented a pew in the church paying for example, \$2.00 a quarter, or \$8.00 a year.] The first time that the plate, or offertory, collection was mentioned, along with the pew rent was in 1869. That year it amounted to \$86.75.

On November 16, 1856, Father Druon was transferred to St. Augustine's Parish, Montpelier, Vermont. Father Francis Picart, the assistant pastor, was appointed to fill the post made vacant by the transfer of Father Druon.<sup>19</sup> He had charge of the same missions in the southwestern part of the state from Brandon to Bennington, as had Father Druon. Father Charles J. Boylan, after his ordination on December 20, 1856, was appointed the assistant pastor at St. Peter's.

At this same time the Catholics in Brandon were placed under the care of the Oblate Fathers of St. Joseph's Parish, Burlington. So one less mission was served by the priests of East Rutland.

Of all the missions connected with St. Peter's Parish, and served regularly by its priests, St. Bridget's Parish in West Rutland was by far the most populated. On January 5, 1857, Father Picart wrote to the Bishop, in his annual report for 1856, "I think that West Rutland will be one of the most important missions of the diocese — it would be useful to give them a priest of their own, without having charge of any other place." Already St. Bridget's had three-fifths of the Catholics in the town of Rutland. The parish census for 1857 showed a total of 1,294 souls in St. Bridget's Parish.<sup>20</sup>

The Bishop acted immediately. On January 24, 1857, Bishop DeGoesbriand appointed Father Picart as the first pastor of St. Bridget's, with charge of the Catholics in Castleton, Fair Haven and Poultney.<sup>21</sup>

On the same date, Father Boylan was appointed Pastor of St. Peter's Parish,



## Chapter 2 The Seed Flourishes

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East Rutland, with missions in Pittsford, Mt. Holly, Wallingford, Danby, East Dorset, Manchester, Arlington and Bennington.

For the next 30 years this dynamic priest presided over the growth of St. Peter's Parish, travelling to the missions by train.

Over the next eleven years, several missions were cut off from St. Peter's Parish and therefore from the care of Father Boylan. On January 1, 1859, the Rev. Jerome Cloarec became the pastor of Bennington with missions in Arlington, Manchester and East Dorset. In 1866, Brandon was given a pastor, the Rev. Thomas Halpin, and Pittsford became its mission. In 1868, the Rev. Thomas Gaffney was appointed pastor of St. Jerome's Parish, East Dorset, with Wallingford, Danby, Manchester and Arlington as missions. Until 1876, Mt. Holly remained a mission of St. Peter's. At that time it was attached to Brandon for six years. In 1882, it was again joined to St. Peter's until 1885.<sup>22</sup>

During these years Father Boylan did not neglect these missions. In July 1859, the church of St. Alphonsus in Pittsford was begun and completed that year. The beautiful stone church of St. Patrick, in Wallingford, was constructed in 1865-1866. In 1875, Mt. Holly was the next place to see a church built.

The spiritual life of the parishioners was encouraged during these early years. When time permitted, Father Boylan went around the parish taking the census. Spiritual exercises, that is, retreats, missions and a triduum were given. On February 17, 1856, Bishop DeGoesbriand gave a retreat in connection with a triduum. Fathers A. Gaudet, O'Reilly and Lynch assisted him.<sup>23</sup> On February 15, 1858, a parish mission was conducted by the Redemptorist Fathers at which 840 received Holy Communion and on the next day 179 were confirmed.<sup>24</sup> In December of 1863, the Jesuit Fathers preached another mission at which at least 1,000 received Holy Communion.<sup>25</sup> In the fall of 1870, the Forty Hours Devotion was established in the diocese.<sup>26</sup>

Catechism and preparation for the sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist were provided the children in the parochial school.<sup>27</sup> These classes were held on Sundays and taught by laymen or laywomen. In 1859, about 40 children made their first Holy Communion. In 1862, 55 were prepared to receive Holy Communion; in 1863, 75 received the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist; in 1868, there were 90.

It is difficult to give a true picture of the Catholic population on a yearly basis, because the population figures for St. Peter's parish were lumped together with those of its missions. There were about 500 Catholics at St. Peter's in 1854. But by 1860, new Catholic families moved into the parish. This is evident both from the Catholic school population, as well as by the number of children making their first Holy Communion. In 1868, the Bishop wrote in his diary "preparations are underway to build a very large church in East Rutland, where it is much needed." The *Rutland Globe* of June 30, 1873, reported that "the old church has long been too small to accommodate the steadily growing population."

In 1869, when all the various mission settlements had been cut off from St. Peter's and assigned to other parishes, the annual parish report listed 170 families and 100 single persons. If we consider four persons as an average family, this would mean about 800 persons in the parish. But this number continued to grow. In 1872, 220 families and 60 single persons were in the parish; in 1875, 285 families and 55



single persons; in 1880, there were 351 families and 15 single persons; in 1886, 550 families. This figure compares favorably with that given in the *Rutland Herald* on October 22, 1885, which stated that "St. Peter's Parish has...about 2,000 parishioners. In 1905, St. Peter's had a population of 3,500."<sup>28</sup>

What brought about this increase in the Catholic population? First, Rutland was a railroad center; and secondly many industries had located there. For example, in 1877-78, the Howe Scale Company moved to Rutland from Brandon and brought many new people to the village.

In connection with the building of the new plant, the *Rutland Herald* of September 5, 1877, related the fact that "the site [of the new building] has been occupied by a number of Irish shanties, the inhabitants paying \$15.00 a year for a half or quarter acre patch. Some of these Irish settlers have occupied the soil for over 20 years. A few of them by saving and hard labor on the railroads, have laid up sufficient to buy themselves land elsewhere. Others, more shiftless, are loath to move. But they must give way, and are out gathering the Murphies and preparing to move. Next week the scale works will begin their building."

In the early 1860's, the congregation of St. Peter's parish was growing. The old church, which could only seat between 300-400, was not large enough to hold all the Catholics for Sunday Mass. It was necessary to think of building a new church. But, before the church would be built, a new parochial school was erected on the southwest corner of the "Ledge lot" on the corner of Mechanic Street [now Convent Avenue] and Meadow Street.

Up until November 1868, the French Canadian Catholics of Rutland belonged to St. Peter's Parish. Many of them would contribute to the building of the new St. Peter's Church which began in the summer of 1868. But, in November 1868, with the approbation of the Bishop, they formed their own parish and in April 1869, received their own pastor, the Rev. Louis Gagnier.

As near as can be determined, by 1867, Sunday Mass was offered at 10:30 AM with Vespers and Benediction at 7:00 PM. From 1868 until the new church was opened in 1873, there were two Sunday Masses: 8:00 AM and 10:30 AM with devotions at 7:00 PM. From July 1873 onward, because of the increased seating capacity of the new St. Peter's, only one Sunday Mass at 10:30 AM took place, always with devotions at 7:00 PM. By 1887 the number of Sunday Masses increased to 8:00 AM and 10:30 AM. In 1891 the Sunday Mass schedule was: 8:00 AM; 9:15 AM and 10:30 AM. In 1893 it was: 8:00 AM; 9:00 AM and 10:30 AM. Holy Day Masses evidently were at 5:30 AM and 9:00 AM.<sup>29</sup>

The Christmas Midnight Mass apparently began in 1876. At Christmas 1875, and prior to this date, there was no midnight Mass at St. Peter's, although one was held at Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ in 1875. The Christmas Masses in 1875 at St. Peter's were 5:30, 6:30 and 10:30 AM.

In the fall of 1870, Bishop DeGoesbriand established the "Forty Hours" Devotion in the diocese. This devotion was first instituted at Milan, Italy, by St. Philip Neri in 1534, and was introduced in the United States in the 1850's by the saintly Bishop John R. Neumann C. Ss. R. of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.<sup>30</sup>

In March of 1871, it was held at St. Peter's Church for the first time. The "Forty



Hours" Devotion is the Solemn Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament for 40 hours in memory of the time Christ's Body lay in the tomb, for the purpose of making reparation for sin and begging God's graces. It included special Masses on the opening and closing days (the first and third days), with a procession with the Blessed Sacrament and the Litany of the Saints. In these early years it was usually held about the middle of March at St. Peter's.

In the late 1870's and early 1880's, the Sacrament of Confirmation was administered yearly by Bishop DeGoesbriand to a class of over 100 children. In 1879, the *Herald* reported that the Catholics had 65 churches and 32 priests and 14 schools in Vermont.<sup>31</sup>

The following note was found in Fr. Boylan's annual report of 1885 to the Bishop: "That portion of the congregation comprised of Center Rutland is now almost idle owing to the removal of the finishing shop to Sutherland Falls and by spring very few families will be left there. The prospect of building a church there is apparently blighted – C. J. Boylan."

With all of the building that had gone on, the parish had incurred a sizeable debt. In 1887 it was \$17,000.00. However, Father Gaffney, the new pastor, was not at all discouraged by it, as this note to the Bishop attests "... I feel contended that it was not worse, considering the great expense of this parish. I hope to bring up the revenue and I know the expense will not be so large."<sup>32</sup>

A few years earlier (1884) the pew rent had been \$3,100.00 and the offertory collection was only \$140.00. In 1887, the pew rent was \$4,087.00 and the plate collection was \$919.00. In 1896 the pew rent income was \$4,052.00, while the collection plate revenue was \$1,124.00. Over these years Father Gaffney had donated to the parish a considerable sum of his own personal money, at least \$4,600.00.<sup>33</sup> The debt was decreased gradually until in 1905 he could write in his report at the end of the year "Free of debt – all moneys owed to me are cancelled."

In 1887 Fr. Gaffney had bought the present Calvary Cemetery and, using \$7,500 of his own money, had built an addition to St. Peter's School in 1898.

In 1893 the annual parish report mentions for the first time nationalities other than English-speaking. In that year there were three Polish-speaking families and seven Italian families.

During the 1890's the social life of the parish was in a most flourishing condition. This was due, in a large extent, to the societies and sodalities, especially to the existence of the Young Men's Catholic Union.

During the last years of Father Gaffney's pastorate, the Catholic population had grown to 3,500 souls. And so at this time thought was being given to the idea of splitting the parish. In September of 1906, Father Gaffney died. On October 23, 1906, at a meeting of the Board the question of dividing Rutland into two parishes was raised. Bishop Michaud and the consultors decided that the time had come to make the move, and divided the City of Rutland into two territorial parishes. The dividing line was Grove Street, Merchants Row, Strongs Avenue, and the lower end of South Main Street. The new parish on the east side of Rutland was named Holy Innocents [now Christ the King]. On January 6, 1907 the Rev. William N. Lonergan was appointed its first pastor.<sup>34</sup>



At this same time the Rev. John M. Brown was appointed the new pastor of St. Peter's Parish. He had been pastor at St. Alphonsus Parish in Pittsford, Vermont.

In order to help Holy Innocents Parish to get a start, St. Peter's Parish was assessed \$10,000.00. In 1907 Father Brown paid \$8,000.00, and in 1908 the other \$2,000.00, to the new parish. Because in Father Gaffney's last years some things had been let go, Father Brown had to make some needed repairs to the church property. As a result of these expenditures, Father Brown found it necessary to give \$3,000.00 of his own money to balance the accounts at the end of the year. Thus he early on followed the example of his illustrious predecessors.

Early in 1907, another event took place, which caused some concern to Father Brown. It was the beginning of an Italian parish in Rutland, Our Mother of Sorrows Parish with the Rev. Francis Crociata as pastor. The number of Italians had increased from the seven families of 1893 to somewhere in the neighborhood of 800 in the Rutland area. But, by the summer of 1908, this parish went out of existence and thereafter the Italians within St. Peter's parish became Father Brown's care.

Father Brown's financial acumen soon had St. Peter's Parish out of debt and he began to accumulate a surplus. By 1929, the parish had a savings account of \$43,283.00. This was acquired by an annual surplus of parish receipts over expenses.

But, during the years of the Great Depression from 1929 to the beginning of World War II, invariably the expense of running the parish exceeded the receipts. Rather than make up these funds from the savings account, Father Brown balanced the books by "a donation from a friend of the parish" [himself]. This amount varied yearly. In 1931, it was \$35.25; in 1933, \$1,876.00; in 1934, \$4,675.65 and in 1938, \$4,220.00.

Expenses were kept to a minimum. But because of the depression receipts began to fall off. In the mid-1920's the parish receipts were a little more than \$23,000.00. But in 1932, they were \$19,383.80; in 1935 \$19,256.50; in 1937 \$20,087.77.



## Chapter 2 The Seed Flourishes

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- <sup>1</sup> *Centenary Book of the Diocese of Burlington*, p. 26 and Bishop DeGoesbriand's Diary
- <sup>2</sup> Bishop's Diary
- <sup>3</sup> *Centenary Book of the Diocese of Burlington*, p.27 and Bishop's Diary
- <sup>4</sup> Bishop's Diary, October 4-5, 1855
- <sup>5</sup> Bishop's Diary
- <sup>6</sup> *Historical Gazetteer of Vermont*, A. Hemenway, p. 1048
- <sup>7</sup> Bishop's Diary
- <sup>8</sup> P. Madigan, *Life and Memoirs of Rev. Charles A. Boylan*,
- <sup>9</sup> *Child's Gazetteer & Business Directory of Rutland County 1881*
- <sup>10</sup> Hemenway, *Historical Gazetteer of Vermont*, p. 1048
- <sup>11</sup> Rutland Land Records, Vol. 19, p. 435
- <sup>12</sup> Hemenway, *Historical Gazetteer of Vermont*, Vol. III, p. 1049
- <sup>13</sup> Rutland Land Records, Vol.19, p. 547
- <sup>14</sup> Hemenway, *Historical Gazetteer of Vermont*, Vol. III, p. 1049
- <sup>15</sup> Bishop's Diary, October 1855
- <sup>16</sup> Rutland Land Records, Vol. 19, p. 643
- <sup>17</sup> P. Madigan, *Life and Memoirs of Rev. Charles A. Boylan*, p. 18
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid, p. 15
- <sup>19</sup> Bishop's Diary, November 6, 1856
- <sup>20</sup> St. Bridget's Census Book for 1857
- <sup>21</sup> Bishop's Diary, January 24, 1857
- <sup>22</sup> Bishop's Diary and *History Of the Catholic Church, The N.E. States* Vol. II
- <sup>23</sup> Bishop's Diary, February 17, 1856
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid, February 15, 1858
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid, December 1863
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid, June 18, 1871
- <sup>27</sup> Annual Parish Report 1857
- <sup>28</sup> Annual Parish reports for these years.
- <sup>29</sup> *Rutland Herald*, February 3, 1867; February 6, 1868; May 21, 1870; June 25, 1870; October 5, 1872; December 20, 1873; June 16, 1874; January 1, 1875; November 19, 1887; March 25, 1891; and May 20, 1893.
- <sup>30</sup> Bishop's Diary, June 8, 1871
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid, July 7, 1879
- <sup>32</sup> Annual Parish Report for 1886
- <sup>33</sup> Annual Parish Report of 1901
- <sup>34</sup> Bishop Michaud's Diary, October 23, 1906



### The House of God

During Father O'Callaghan's ministry in Rutland from 1830 to 1837, Mass was offered in a private home five or six times a year.<sup>1</sup>

At the beginning of Father Daly's missionary labors from 1837, the Catholics of Rutland had Sunday Mass more often, about once a month. By 1840 their numbers had not grown to any appreciable extent. Zadock Thompson in his *History of Vermont*, states that "there were upwards to 100 dwellings in East Rutland and 13 stores."<sup>2</sup> But by 1847, their numbers increased so that a private home was too small to accommodate them. At first Mass was offered in a building on Main Street known as "Ball Alley";<sup>3</sup> and by 1853, in the Old Courthouse on Main Street.<sup>4</sup>

In November 1854, when Father Druon arrived, in order to have a permanent house of worship of their own, he began to look around for a central place. He found a lot on Meadow Street. On May 4, 1855, he bought this plot of ground [now 11 Meadow Street] from John Cain for \$125.00. It was bounded on the south by the house lot owned by Richard P. Snow; on the west by East Creek; on the north by the lands of John Cain, and on the east by Meadow Street. On Meadow Street, it was 3 ½ rods and 2 ½ links long [a rod = 16.5 feet; a link = 7.92 inches], about 60 feet in length.<sup>5</sup>

It was here that Father Druon built the first Catholic Church in Rutland. It was constructed of red brick and measured 63 feet by 35 feet and about 25 feet high. Over the front door and near the peak of the roof was a marble plaque with the date 1855. In 1887 it was sold to Frederick Chaffee. For a number of years thereafter it was used as a marble shop. It is now used for light manufacturing.

How was it built? Very little has been written about this. In various histories, e.g. Hemenway's *Vermont Historical Gazetteer* on page 1049 it states that "in 1855 Father Zephyrin Druon erected a brick edifice on Meadow Street." It is very likely that the Catholics of Rutland not only contributed money for this purpose but also gave their time [a day per week] to erect it. There was no money in the treasury of the church to build it.

This building served as the church until the present church was completed in 1873. In many places, miscalculations of the future growth of a parish led to the necessity for new churches to be built.

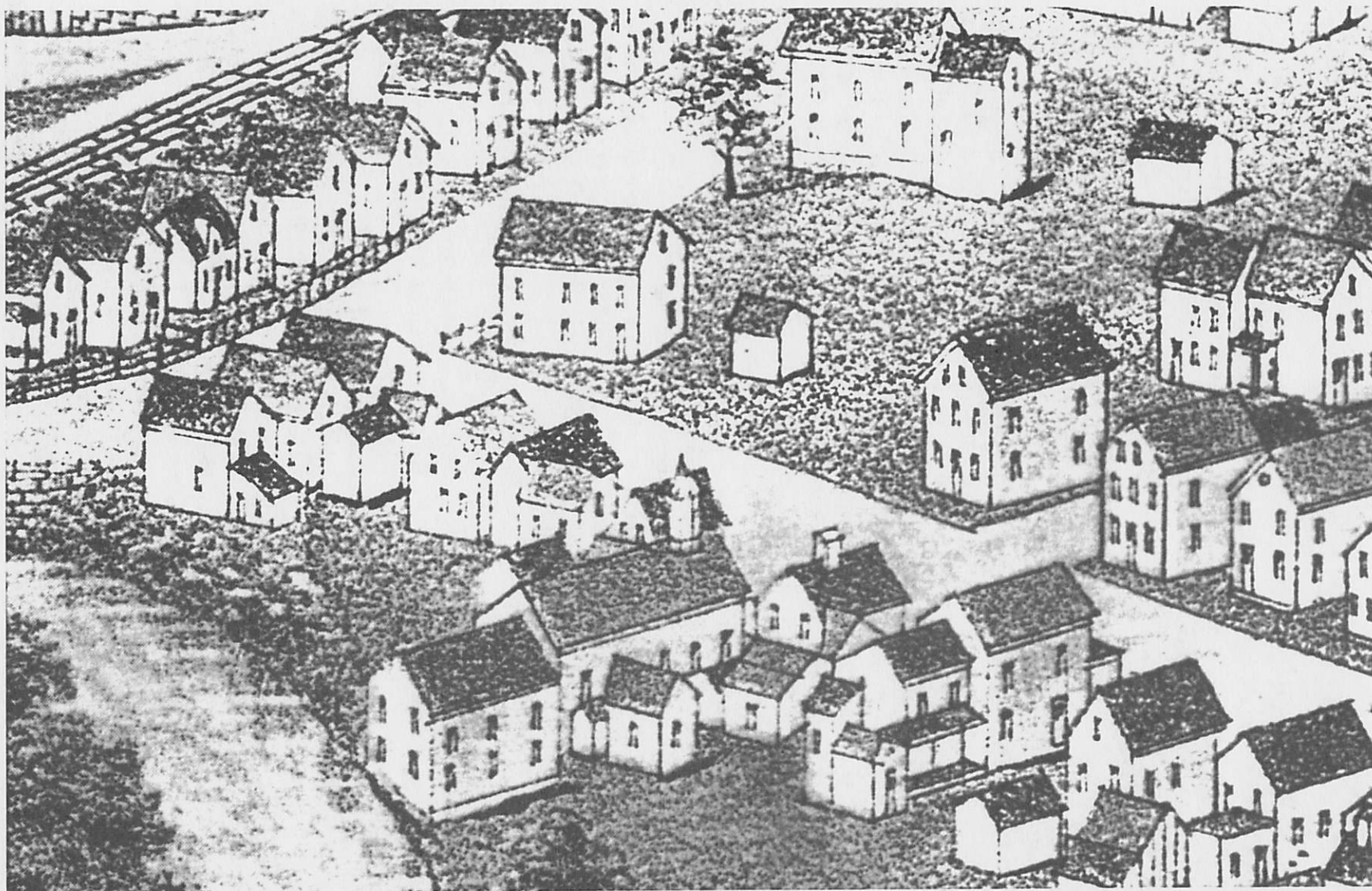
By the year 1864, this church was too small to hold the growing population. Father Boylan was fortunate to find a large lot on the south side of Washington Street and the east side of Wales Street. Bishop Louis DeGoesbriand bought this property on November 12, 1864, from Ephraim A. Chapin for \$1,500.00<sup>6</sup>

To raise money for their new church, the Catholic ladies of Rutland initiated a Catholic Fair or Bazaar. The first one was held from January 30 to February 4, 1865. It was reported to be the largest and most successful fair ever held.<sup>7</sup>

From that year on the Catholic Ladies Fair became an annual event. However, it was usually held in mid-October thereafter. In 1867 from October 18 to 26 they realized \$3,500.00; in 1870 from October 10 to 16 the profits were \$3,500.00; in 1871, \$2,539.00 was cleared.<sup>8</sup> These fairs continued on into the 1880's.

To prepare for these fairs, the many women of the parish would make useful





*There are no known photographs of the first St. Peter's Church. This 1885 sketch shows the church with its steeple on the west side of Meadow Street. It also shows the later school addition at the rear of the church. Although the sketch is over 30 years after the construction of the first St. Peter's Church, it does give a nice feel for the neighborhood and a sense of the size of the church. The brick building, although much modified, still stands.*



articles for the home as well as for gifts. At fair time these were donated to be sold for the benefit of the new church. Usually a supper was served; a band was present to furnish music for dancing or listening; and a raffle was held. Occasionally some outside entertainer was hired to perform. For the first few years the Town Hall, and in later years Landon's Hall, was home to the Bazaar. It provided a lively evening which was enjoyed by all. Such was the popularity of the event, that many from other towns in the neighborhood came not only to take advantage of the enjoyment but also to help these Catholics build their new church. The Rutland Railroad offered half-fares to help promote attendance. The Catholics of West Rutland, Sutherland Falls and Mt. Holly were among those who patronized them.

Besides the money realized from these sources, there was an admission charge to enter the hall. A family season ticket was \$2.00; an individual season ticket was \$1.00; and a single admission was 25 cents.<sup>9</sup>

The men of the parish were not to be left out in this great project. In 1870, they started an annual picnic at Pierpoint's Grove, south of the cemetery on West Street, on the banks of the Otter Creek. An admission charge of 25 cents drew in several hundred dollars each year. A meal and refreshments were served; a band furnished music for dancing; and a number of races of various lengths as well as games filled the day. These were usually sponsored by the Rutland Hibernian Literary and Benevolent Society. Held usually in July, a band would lead a parade through town in the morning, and outdoor sports and military bands from the area would drill in the afternoon.<sup>10</sup> Some years a public entertainment was held during the winter months for the benefit of St. Peter's Church.<sup>11</sup>

In 1867, Father Boylan abandoned the idea of building the new church on the southeast corner of Washington and Wales Streets, when the "Ledge" lot on Mechanic Street [now Convent Avenue] became available. On February 6, 1867, Bishop DeGoesbriand bought this property from Mr. Evelyn Pierpoint for \$1,000.00. It was bounded as follows: beginning at the northeast corner of lands owned by Mrs. McDonough; northerly about 200 feet to the corner of Meadow and Mechanic Streets; easterly about 130 feet to the northwest corner of the land of Wilson Fisher; southerly 230 feet to the northwest corner of the lands of Patrick Foster; and westerly to the Meadow Street line.<sup>12</sup>

Perhaps the 1869 map of the Village of Rutland gives a clue to Father Boylan's final choice of the location for this new church. It was in the area, known as "Nebraska," that the concentration of the Catholic families was the largest.<sup>13</sup>

[The area around St. Peter's church, on the west side of the railroad tracks, has been known for years as "Nebraska." In fact, this appellation appears in the *Rutland Herald* on February 7, 1867, when it was reported that "the Catholic congregation of Rutland have recently purchased the lot known as the "Ledge" lot in "Nebraska."

How did this term originate? Nothing seems to be known for certain. There are several explanations: (1) One explanation for the term was that on the corner of School Street and Forest Street there was a store, McGinnis' Nebraska Store. (2) Another explanation is that it was so named, rather unconsciously. Father Boylan had been called many times to break up fights among two or more groups of well-oiled Irishmen on Saturday nights. Finally, one Sunday morning at the Mass, Father scolded the



men in the congregation for their drinking and fighting, and is supposed to have said that they were as bad as the outlaws in Nebraska. At that time, the Nebraska territory was widely known for the number of outlaws within it. It may well be that the first explanation was a result of the second.]

On March 25, 1868, Bishop DeGoesbriand visited Father Boylan at the Meadow Street rectory and wrote in his diary: "preparations to build a very large church in Rutland were underway where it is very much needed."

For the design of the building, Father Boylan secured the services of Patrick C. Keely, a noted Catholic architect from Brooklyn, New York [He is said to have built over 700 Catholic churches in his lifetime.]

With these plans in hand, Father Boylan began the construction of the new St. Peter's Church in 1868.<sup>14</sup> But first the stone for the building had to be excavated from its bed on the church lot. Hemenway in her *Vermont Historical Gazetteer* (Vol. III, page 1049) states that "the stone having been quarried out of the very lot now occupied by the church."<sup>15</sup> The *Rutland Globe* reported: "St. Peter's Church is built of stone quarried upon the spot."<sup>16</sup> There can be no doubt but that the parishioners who were employed by the marble companies at Center Rutland and West Rutland gave their time, perhaps evenings, to quarry enough stone for the church from this location. Leveling off this bed of stone, the foundation of the church was placed upon it. On September 5, 1868 the *Herald* reported: "the Catholic Church on Mechanic Street is not progressing very rapidly owing to the number of men employed."

Tradition has it that Father Boylan would announce from the pulpit on Sunday, the day of the week the men were to come to work on the church. It is said that men brought their picks, shovels and even their teams of horses from such places as Shrewsbury to do whatever they were able to do to complete this edifice.

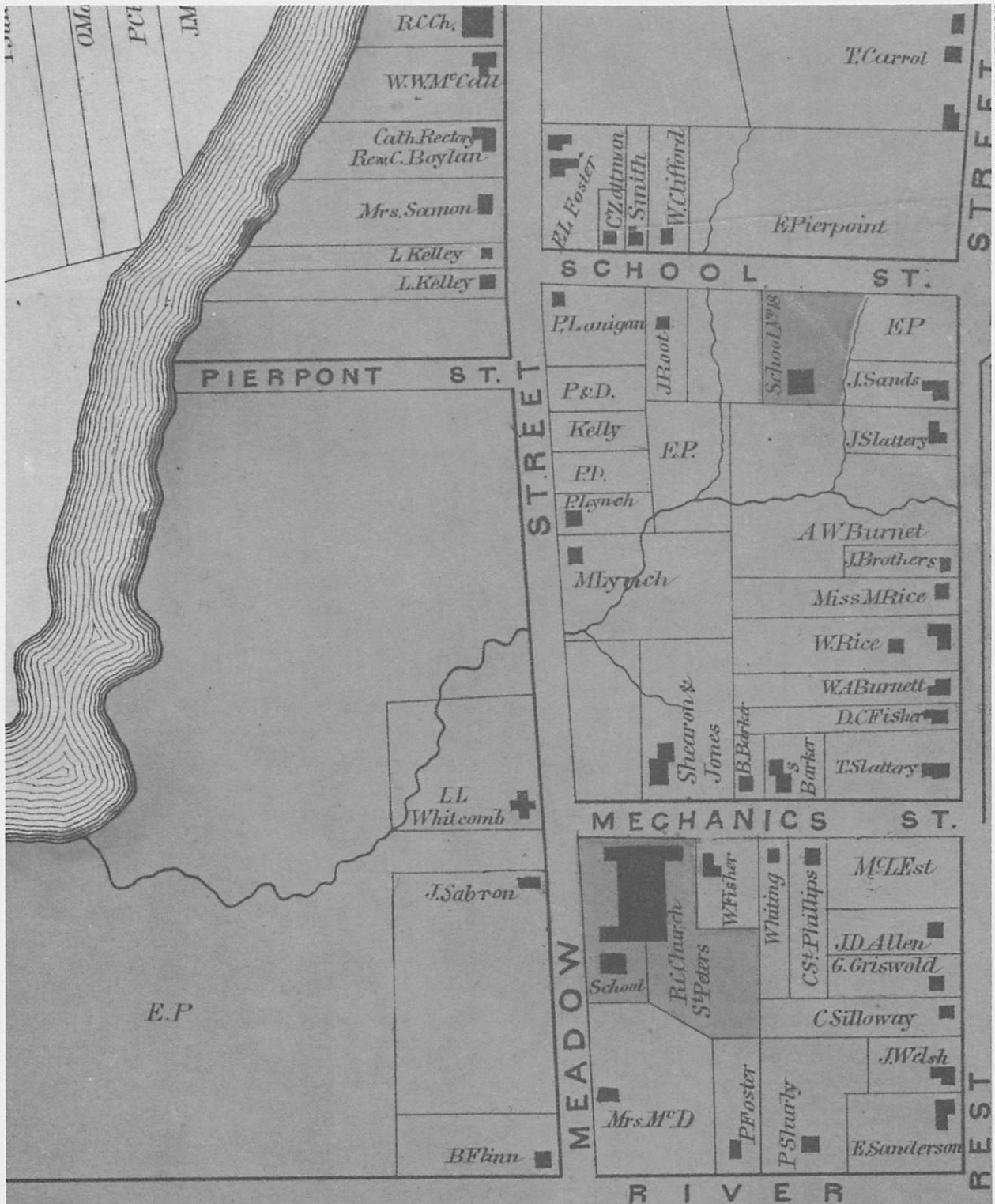
Several stone masons were employed to raise the wall of the church. Father Frederick Crowley and others have mentioned that Mr. Florence Crowley [Father Crowley's grandfather] and the three Pats's [Gilrain, Cummings and one other] were among these masons. The parish report of 1873 mentioned another, Michael Flynn. No doubt other men not skilled in masonry helped the masons, mixing the cement and raising it to the masons on the walls and by means of block and tackle raised the stone to the desired heights. These men took time off from their regular jobs to work on the church for which they received the wage prevalent for those years.

But the work went on slowly. Father Boylan and a number of men, when time could be spared from other work, worked on the building. One elderly parishioner remembered his father telling that when he was a boy he used to see the good father getting the stone ready to be put in place, even in the winter. Father Boylan's hands would be purple from the cold. The boy chided Father Boylan saying that he should at least wear gloves on such a job at that time of the year.

However, slowly but surely the foundation was laid and the stone walls began to rise. On July 5, 1869 Bishop DeGoesbriand blessed the cornerstone of the church in the presence of a large gathering.<sup>17</sup>

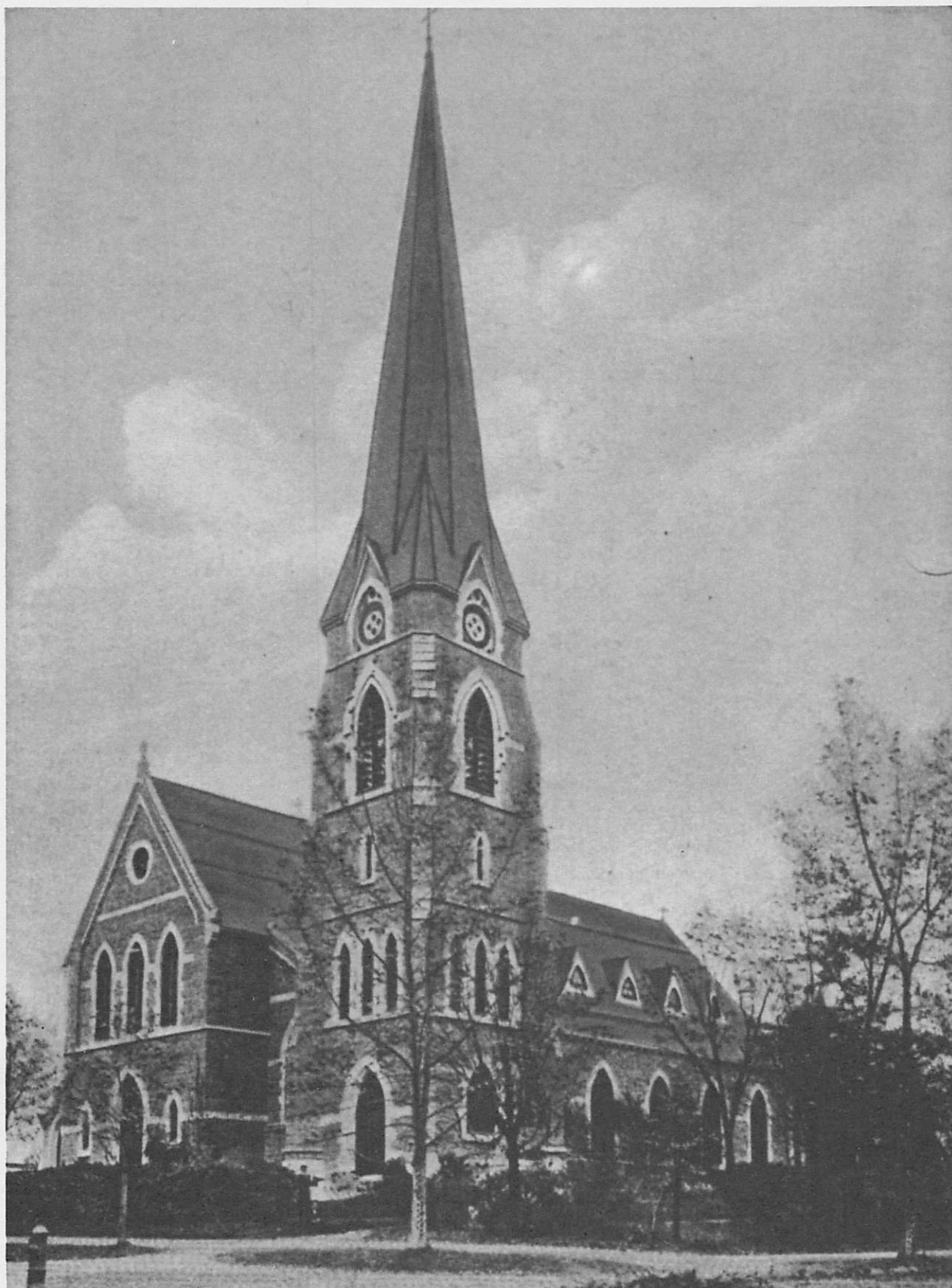
Finally the stone walls were completed in the summer of 1870 and the work of roofing the building was well under way by September. The *Herald* reported that: "the masonry had been performed under the personal supervision of Father Boylan





This portion of the 1869 Beer's Map of Rutland shows the location of the first St. Peter's Church on the west side of Meadow Street. The rectory was the second building south of the church. On the southeast corner of Meadow and Mechanic Streets was the site of the new St. Peter's Church, then under construction. The St. Peter's School was in the building that is the rectory today. After completion of the new church, the old church became the school, the old rectory became a convent, and the old school became the rectory.





*St. Peter's Church was often photographed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century.*



who was deserving of much credit, not only for his persistent efforts to erect such an edifice as this, but for the minuteness with which he carried out the plans of the architect. Mr. Milo Lyman, a local master builder had begun the woodwork."<sup>18</sup>

On August 27, 1871, Bishop DeGoesbriand again visited the construction site with Father Boylan. No doubt he encouraged him in his efforts. The Bishop was proud of this building. He wrote in his diary that night: "the Catholics of this place have contributed with extraordinary generosity toward the building of their large stone church which is now under roof."

On September 1, 1871, the *Herald* noted that: "the exterior of St. Peter's Church is now completed, with the exception of the tower and porch. An elegant gilt cross will be put into position on the front gable next Sunday at 4:00 PM."

"On Sunday, September 3 at 4:00 PM, the ceremony of positioning the beautiful gilt cross on the front gable of the church began with a procession from old St. Peter's Church on Meadow Street. A cross bearer accompanied by two acolytes led the procession. They were followed by the members of the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary, then came the boys and young men of the Father Mathew Juvenile Total Abstinence Society. Next the Hibernian Literary and Benevolent Society, the school children, parishioners, and lastly the priests with Father Boylan carrying the cross. The procession wended its way up Meadow Street to School Street, down School Street to Forest Street and up Forest Street to Mechanic Street and then to the church. Following an address by the Reverend T. J. Gaffney of East Dorset, the cross, blessed by Father Boylan, was hoisted into its position. The choir chanted appropriate music. A great crowd witnessed the ceremony. The new cross cost \$100.00 and the names of the donors were enclosed within it. The procession then went back to the old church for Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament."<sup>19</sup>

By September of 1872, the tower was erected and the framework of the steeple was completed. A magnificent cross in bronze was raised to the top of the steeple. It was hoped that the structure would be so far completed by Christmas that the parishioners could begin to use it.<sup>20</sup> But it was not until March 2, 1873, that it was opened to the public for inspection, even though it was not quite finished.<sup>21</sup>

On Easter Sunday, April 13, 1873, the parishioners of St. Peter's Parish entered their new church for High Mass. The happy congregation with their friends assembled at the old church on Meadow Street where a procession was formed. It was headed by the choir which sang hymns on the way to the new church. It included the Ladies Sodality, the Father Mathew Total Abstinence Society, the Hibernian Literary and Benevolent Society, the school children, parishioners and Father Boylan and the altar boys. It marched up Meadow Street to School Street, then to Forest and turning west on Mechanic Street arrived at the church. An immense audience was present at the church.

In his sermon, instead of preaching the usual Easter sermon, Father Boylan spoke in complimentary terms of the congregation's generosity for this sanctuary to God. At the conclusion of his talk he said: "For truly the building of this edifice and the giving to build it are but the returning to God that which is His and thanks are due to the Lord for the opportunity given to you to show your faith and to erect such a monument to your zeal."



He also complimented the parishioners on the fact that this work had been carried so far and that no encumbrances, debt or mortgage was upon the property. He urged them to persist in their generous giving to the Lord and then offered them the opportunity to contribute as they saw fit. When the collection was taken up that morning it amounted to \$900.00.<sup>22</sup>

Such was the generosity of these parishioners. They contributed so generously out of their meager earnings [about \$1.00 a day]; they supported the fairs, the picnics, and the entertainment; they gave a day's labor as often as they were able; and they contributed as much as they could from their savings. It was only right and just that they felt a glow of satisfaction for a job well done. Most of them could stand out in the street before the church and see its classic lines and on entering the building see only the beauty. This was their work.

But if such sentiments could well up in the hearts of the parishioners how much more so could the heart of this zealous self-sacrificing priest experience a feeling of justifiable pride. As one writer put it: "he gave all that he could spare toward its building, and also worked along side of the men to see this beautiful church erected. He had had a hand not only in the planning, but also in the erection of this House of God."<sup>23</sup> In the parish report for the year 1874, Father Boylan wrote: "I never retain a dollar for personal use as long as I see it required in any other way. Hence marriage, baptismal, [and Mass] intention money is applied without any reserve through my anxiety to cancel the entire debt."<sup>24</sup>

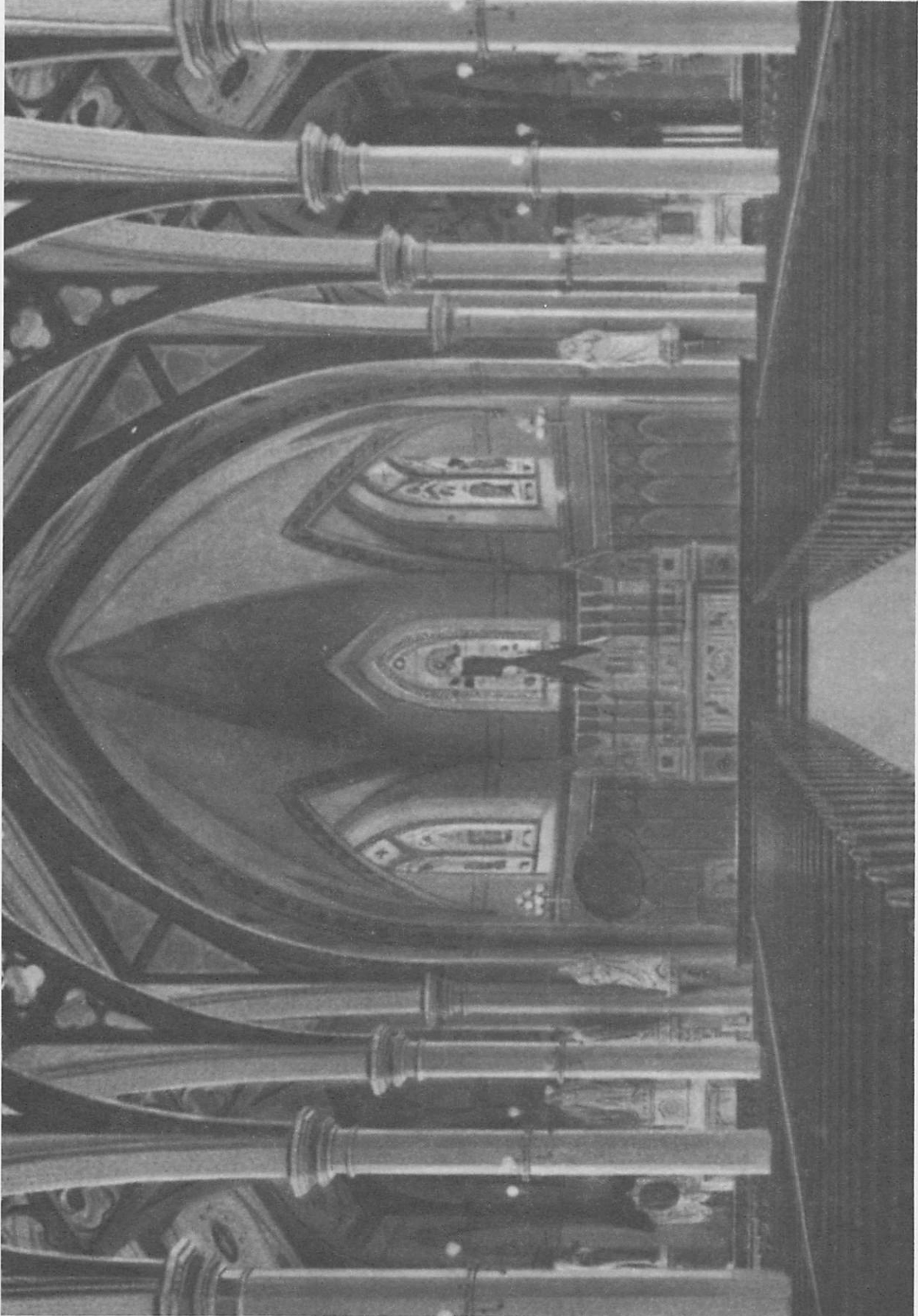
The old church had long been too small to accommodate the steadily growing Catholic population.<sup>25</sup> As the crowds came to church that Easter Sunday, they saw a magnificent Gothic church rising from the lot. The stone out of which it was built was blue-gray in color. It was 150 feet long and 71 feet wide. Extending across the front of it was a wide piazza leading to the three entrances. On all of the prominent points of the building there were affixed golden crosses. The spire, or steeple, rising 200 feet above the ground, was surmounted by a larger bronze cross. A handsome slate roof covered the pitched roof of the building. At the back of the building, on the Meadow Street side, close by the schoolhouse, the sacristy projected out about 30 feet and was 20 feet deep.

Going up the center steps, parishioners entered a vestibule that measured 20 feet deep and 35 feet wide. The inner doors of the vestibule opened into the body of the church. At first glance there was the wide expanse of the main aisle. It measured 103 feet long. The interior of the church was 65 feet wide. There were two other narrow aisles on each side of the church. The pews capable of seating about 1,400 persons, were made of oiled chestnut trimmed with black walnut. These were the work of a local contractor, Mr. J. W. King.

Six columns on each side to the building supported the roof. These and nearly all the woodwork were the responsibility of Mr. Milo Lyman of Rutland and Mr. Hopson of Whitehall, New York. On the columns, or pillars, there were bronze gas fixtures arranged in a circle around each pillar. Each fixture contained four brackets in order to light the church. In all there were 285 gas jets.

The windows were the work of Morgan Brothers of New York City. The windows in the side-walls were of colored glass. The windows on each side, nearest to the





*At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century only minor changes had been made to the interior of St. Peter's Church.*



### Chapter 3 The House of God

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sanctuary, were of stained glass. The front east window, being that of the figure of St. Patrick, while the west front window had the figure of St. Peter. In the sanctuary, over the main altar, there was in the center a beautiful stained glass window representing the Ascension of Our Lord into Heaven. On the east side of this, the stained glass window represented the figures of Saints Joachim and Anne. On the west side of the center window, another represented the figures of Joseph and Mary.

Looking back from the sanctuary above the front door, was a gallery or balcony that could accommodate about 150 persons, besides the choir, with the organ on an elevated platform in the extreme rear.

The sanctuary was elevated, two steps above the church floor. It was 36 feet deep and 65 feet wide. The wooden altar rail, also the work of J.W. King, separated the sanctuary from the body of the church. The main altar was on a platform elevated by three steps.

Above the altar and the three stained glass windows at the front of the church was a magnificent fresco of the "Last Judgement." This was one of the largest frescoes in the United States measuring 60 feet by 28 feet and contained 264 figures. In the center of this large panel there was the figure of Christ seated in judgement with the cross, the symbol of salvation, in the background. On either side of Him there were groups of figures – on one side the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament and on the other the doctors, confessors, virgins, and martyrs of the new dispensation. Beneath the central figure was St. Michael the Archangel, with a drawn sword of justice in his hand, making a division between the just and unjust. On the right side of St. Michael there were the crowds of the elect while on the left side the crowds of the damned. With the elect could be seen an angel with the Book of Life containing an inscription on an open page. On the opposite side, the Book of Death was borne among the tormented. The figures were all large and striking, presenting the contrast between the joy of the children of God and the remorseful agonies of those cast into the everlasting fires.<sup>26</sup>

On the east wall of the main sanctuary there was another fresco of the Nativity of Our Lord, while on the opposite wall on the west, there was a large fresco of the Resurrection of Our Lord from the dead.

On the east side of the sanctuary, over a small side altar, there was another large painting of the Annunciation. While on the west over another chapel altar, a painting of the Holy Family depicted Christ as a child engaged in His foster father's trade and seated at the feet of His parents. The paintings, of extraordinary excellence, were the work of Lang and Kenkelin of New York.

Plans for the dedication were made with Bishop DeGoesbriand. On May 27 it was announced that the most Reverend John Loughlin, Bishop of Brooklyn, New York, would preach the dedicatory sermon. June 29 was the date set by Father Boylan for this great event.<sup>27</sup>

The day of the dedication, Sunday June 29, 1873, the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, dawned warm and sunny. The ceremony began at 10:15 AM, at the old church on Meadow Street, with the forming of the procession. The order of the procession was as follows:

- 1) The Father Mathew Juvenile Total Abstinence Society with banners and



regalia;

2) The Hibernian Literary and Benevolent Society outfitted with their regalia and carrying banners;

3) The ladies of the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary, dressed in white, carrying their banners;

4) The members of the congregation;

5) The acolytes and chanters;

6) The members of the clergy followed by the Bishops.

The procession went up Meadow Street to School Street, east on School Street to Forest Street, then south on Forest Street to Mechanic Street and finally west on Mechanic Street to the church. An immense throng of people lined each side of Mechanic Street, awaiting the procession. As the procession reached Mechanic Street, marching two by two, it separated into two parallel lines along the street, forming an avenue through which the clergy, the bishops, and their attendants walked to the center door.

Bishop DeGoesbriand gave the Very Reverend Thomas J. Lynch Vicar General of the diocese permission to bless the new church. Father Lynch accompanied by some of the clergy chanted the opening prayer: "Direct, O Lord, we ask you, all our actions by your inspiration and carry them on by your assistance, that every prayer and work of ours may always begin from you and through you be brought to completion. Through Christ Our Lord." To which all answered: "Amen."<sup>28</sup>

Then Father Lynch, sprinkling the front of the building with Holy Water, intoned "Asperges Me" [Sprinkle Me] and accompanied by his attendants, circled the church, going to his right and sprinkling the outside walls. Back at the front door he chanted the following prayer in Latin: "O Lord God, whom heaven and earth cannot contain, you have nevertheless condescended to have a house where your name may be invoked; we beseech you, visit this place and through the intercession and merits of the Blessed Ever Virgin Mary, St. Peter, and all your saints purify it and keep it purified by the infusion of your grace; and as you completed the work of your beloved David through the devotion of his son Solomon, deign to perfect our desires in this work and drive from it all spiritual wickedness. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen."

Everyone else remaining outside, the clergy entered the church two by two, followed by Father Lynch. The Litany of the Saints was then chanted by all within its walls. At its conclusion Father Lynch prayed that God "visit and bless this church; through the intercession of your saints, drive out the devils and send in the angels of Peace. Amen."

Then while the priests recited Psalms: 119, 120 and 121, Father Lynch sprinkled the interior walls of the church. At the conclusion of which he prayed: "O God, you who sanctify places dedicated to your name, pour your grace upon this house of prayer; so that all here who invoke your holy name, may experience the help of your mercy. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen."

At the conclusion of this ceremony, the doors of the church were thrown open and the impatient crowd rushed in and soon filled the edifice. No seats were reserved. Many besides the congregation were in attendance. Among them were several representing other Rutland denominations. The officers of the Hibernian Literary and Be-



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nevolent Society acted as ushers and, by their timely presence and kindly offices, did much toward putting everyone in place.

The following members of the clergy were present; The Right Reverend Louis DeGoesbriand, Bishop of Burlington; The Right Reverend John Loughlin, Bishop of Brooklyn; The Very Reverend Thomas J. Lynch, Vicar General of Burlington; The Reverend Charles O'Reilly of West Rutland; The Reverend Charles J. Boylan, Pastor; The Reverend Henry Cardinal, of Rutland; The Reverend Thomas J. Gaffney, of East Dorset; The Reverend J.C. McLoughlin, of Brandon; The Reverend Father Cassidy, of Brooklyn, New York; The Reverend Father O'Beirne, of Brooklyn, New York and The Reverend Father Flattelly, of Canton, Massachusetts.

The officers of the Pontifical High Mass were: The Right Reverend Louis DeGoesbriand, Celebrant; Father Gaffney, Deacon; Father O'Reilly, subdeacon; Father Cardinal, as priest of honor; Father Lynch, Master of Ceremonies.

The choir of 50 voices rendered, in a beautiful and impressive manner, the music of the Mass. The organ, however had scarcely volume enough for this large church.

After the Gospel, Bishop Loughlin preached the dedicatory sermon. His text was: "For this is the will of God, your sanctification." There followed an explanation of Grace and the Sacraments in the divine economy of salvation.

At the end of the sermon he had these words to say: "Your energy and liberal charity with the zeal and self-sacrificing labors of your venerable pastor have accomplished a great work. To him and to you is great credit due. This magnificent edifice will long remain a living monument of what you have done together – Shepherd and flock – for the glory of God."<sup>29</sup>

By the time Mass was over, everyone was very warm

A *Herald* writer mentioned Father Boylan as "the indomitable pastor whose energy and capacity have enabled him to surmount all the numerous obstacles with which he was necessarily surrounded."<sup>30</sup>

The cost of the church is not certain. Various accounts mention \$60,000.00 or \$100,000.00. At the end of the year there were several bills outstanding against the parish. Most of these were for work done to finish the church. As these may be of interest, they are:

Forester of New York City – Frescoes	\$1,400.00
Lang and Kenkelin – Artists	850.00
Morgan Brothers – Windows	1,118.00
Smith and Crane – Altar	350.00
P.S. Ryan – Rutland	1,013.00
Edson – Lumber	358.00
Martel - Painter	223.00
L. G. Kingsley	250.00
Landon and Huntoon	200.00
Barney – Laborer	350.00
Michael Flynn – Mason	130.00
John Hurley (borrowed money)	500.00 <sup>31</sup>

Such was the generosity of the parishioners of St. Peters that all of this work



was accomplished with a debt of only \$7,111.00 in December 1873. Of course in their bazaars or fairs, picnics and entertainments, many of their non-Catholic friends as well as friends in the neighboring towns, patronized these events to make them so successful.

To complete the church several rather large items remained to be done. The grounds were landscaped and a cast iron picket fence was erected along the property on Meadow Street and Mechanic Street in 1874 or 1875.<sup>32</sup>

Although the tower was completed there was no voice calling the parishioners to the worship of God. The reason was that Father Boylan had been busy building a convent for the Sisters of Saint Joseph. But once this was finished, then Father gave his attention to procuring a set of bells.

Again with the Bishop's permission, he first had a subscription drive among the parishioners. So enthusiastic were they, that within a few months they had contributed the sum of \$2,344.00. So the bells were ordered from the Meneely Bell Foundry of Troy, New York. By the middle of December they were at St. Peter's.<sup>33</sup> Bishop DeGoesbriand could be in Rutland on Sunday, December 16, to bless the bells. The parishioners were notified and Father Thomas J. Gaffney was asked to deliver the sermon for the occasion and he consented.

On that Sunday at 3:00 PM, every available seat in St. Peter's Church was occupied. Father Gaffney rose to the occasion with an eloquent sermon. Following the sermon, Bishop DeGoesbriand, accompanied by the large audience came out to the yard where the bells reposed. First the bells were washed with holy Water, then anointed and blessed.<sup>34</sup>

As is still the custom, each bell received a name. The largest bell, weighing 3,000 pounds, was named St. Peter; the middle bell, weighing 1500 pounds, was named St. Mary; and the last, weighing 800 pounds, was called St. Joseph. Another bell, St. Aloysius, weighing 150 pounds, was also blessed for the new St. Peter's Parochial School. The bells were cast of the best metal and had a fine tone. Within a few days workmen soon had them placed in the tower.

In addition to Bishop DeGoesbriand, those present for the ceremony were the Reverends Charles J. Boylan, Jerome M. Gelot, both of Rutland; Charles O'Reilly of West Rutland; Thomas J. Gaffney of East Dorset; and J.C. McLoughlin of Brandon. The ceremony lasted an hour.

For eleven years the church had been heated in the wintertime by furnaces or stoves placed around the church. But in 1884, Father Boylan removed these stoves and installed steam heat.<sup>35</sup>

At the conclusion of his first sermon at St. Peter's on January 9, 1887, Father Gaffney proposed two memorials to honor the late lamented Father Boylan. To honor the memory of Father Boylan, Father Gaffney told the parishioners that he wished to see a monument erected to Father Boylan over his grave and a new memorial organ to replace the old organ that was inadequate. For this purpose beginning the next Sunday he solicited large amounts of money as well as small, in a special collection. He expected these two projects to cost \$2,500.00 to \$3,000.00<sup>36</sup> By April 20 the fund amounted to over \$3,000.00 and was still increasing.<sup>37</sup>

The new organ was ordered from the firm of Hook and Hasting of Boston. It was



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to cost \$2,500.00. By the first of June it had arrived, was set up and workmen were engaged in tuning it. By the end of the month all of the work was finished.<sup>38</sup>

On July 4, 1887, at 9:00 AM, the organ was dedicated at a Requiem High Mass for the soul of the beloved former pastor. Fifteen hundred parishioners attended this Mass. A choir of 30 voices under the direction of Mr. T. Delisle, with Miss Bridget Clifford as organist, sang the Gregorian Requiem High Mass. [Miss Clifford had been the church organist for 18 years.] The new organ completely satisfied everyone. Its volume completely filled the huge edifice.<sup>39</sup>

The work on the statue of Father Boylan, to be erected over his grave, took more time. The contract was let to the Houlihan Brothers, a marble shop, in Center Rutland. Since the statue and its pedestal were to be of "Rutland Italian" marble, blocks suitable for this purpose had to be found. The yards at Sheldon and Slasson in West Rutland were searched. In June of 1888, Houlihan Brothers had found a marble block that was suitable for the foundation, and began shaping it in their shops. The completed pedestal weighed six tons. About Thanksgiving Day this same year it was set on its foundation in the church yard. It took six horses to draw it from the shop in Center Rutland to the church yard.

Shortly before Thanksgiving the Vermont Marble Company found a piece of "Rutland Italian" in their yard. This was taken to Houlihan Brothers shop and the work on the statue began. Mr. Charles Jarrott, a sculptor from New York, had been engaged to carve it. In the spring of 1887, he had made a model of it. About December 1, 1888 he began the carving. The statue was larger than life size, about 7 feet tall. It weighed about 4 tons when it was finished.<sup>40</sup>

In February 1889, the statue was completed. But it was not until the spring that it was set on its pedestal. It was an excellent likeness of the good priest. Draped in the priestly robes of his office, the statue reminded the beholder of the face and figure of Father Boylan while the raised hand pointing toward heaven, recalled the familiar instructions and fatherly admonitions of the "Soggarth Aroon."

The statue was placed at the northwest corner of the tower, facing the convent. On the pedestal there are inscriptions on each of the four sides. On the north side facing the convent the text reads:

Sacred to the memory of  
Reverend Charles Boylan  
Who as pastor of St. Peter's for 30 years  
Discharged his duties with fidelity  
To his God, honor to himself and  
Great edification to his flock, universally  
Loved and esteemed. He departed this life  
On the Fourth of December, 1886 in the 56<sup>th</sup> year  
Of his age and 30<sup>th</sup> of his Priesthood.  
Requiescant in pace.

On the plaque on the east side of the pedestal is inscribed:

Truly was he a father to his people,  
Participator in their sorrows, a  
Counselor in their difficulties, and



Their devoted and edifying guide

In their way to virtue.

On the south side the inscription on that plaque is the Latin of the inscription on the north.

The west side inscription reads:

The works of his life proclaim

His praises more loudly and

Enduringly than this marble which

A sorrowing people erect to his

Memory and claim all

Lovers of Religion tribute.

May his soul rest in peace.

The church was lighted by gas. This was done by coal gas purchased from the local gas company. But in 1891, Father Gaffney purchased a "gas machine." This was a machine, installed in the basement of the church, which mixed air (60%) and gasoline (40%) together and made gas. The mixer was placed in the basement of the church because of the even temperature. The church, rectory, and convent were lighted by it. It was considerably cheaper than coal gas. This cost about \$1,500.00.<sup>41</sup>

The interior of the church, especially the walls, had become dirty with the soot and grime and dust of the past 20 years. So Father Gaffney had the walls cleaned and repainted. Except for cleaning and retouching it is certain that he did not destroy the frescoes that were still in good condition. Who did the work? No mention is made. But perhaps it was Mr. Charles Vitta of Brooklyn whose daughter, Mother St. Charles, was a member of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

In 1891, new Stations of the Cross, which had been ordered from Munich, Germany, at a cost of \$615.00, arrived. Usually the blessing and erecting of the stations is done by the Bishop but Father Gaffney was empowered to do this. On Sunday, February 22, at the 10:30 AM Mass, they were blessed and erected by Father Gaffney. The Reverend D. J. O'Sullivan, the President of St. Joseph's College, Burlington, was the preacher for this occasion.<sup>42</sup>

In the fall of 1892, a new steam boiler to replace the old one was installed in the church.<sup>43</sup>

From the middle 1890's until after World War II no major repairs or improvements seem to have been made on the church. Everything was in good shape. Debts incurred by the parish were being paid off. The only new improvement was the installation of electric lights to replace the gas. [In 1886, Father Boylan had talked of putting in two arc lights in the church but this never materialized.]<sup>44</sup> Then came the stock market crash in 1929 which was followed by the "Great Depression." Money was scarce and only the necessary repairs were made.

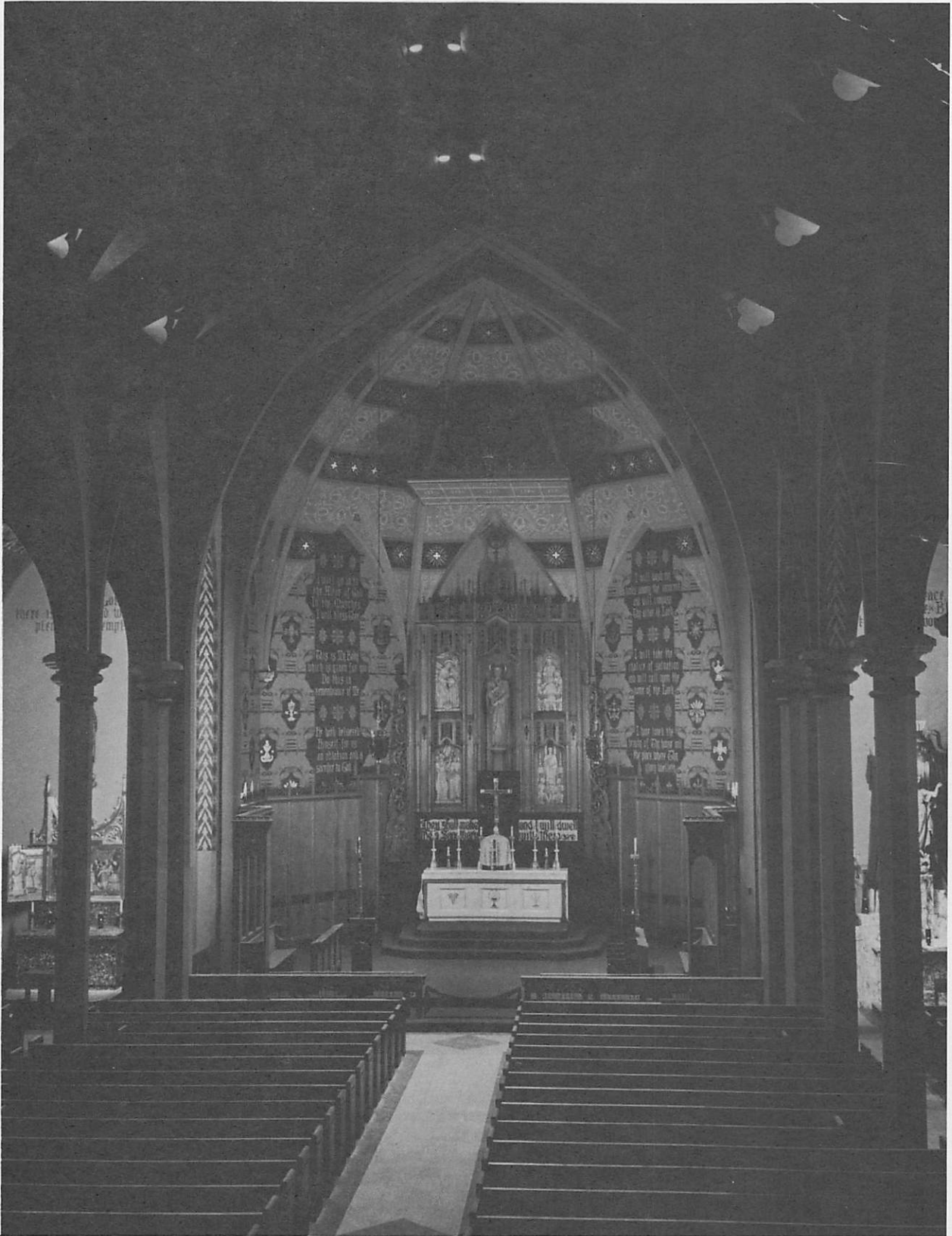
During these years the roof on the east side of the church sprung a leak and the walls on that side became stained. This was repaired but the damage was done. Of course, dust and age made the interior walls look dirty. By the end of World War II the church was in need of renovating. In 1946, the Reverend Robert Joyce, became pastor of St. Peter's, succeeding Monsignor John M. Brown. Within a short time he began planning to renovate and to redecorate the structure's interior.





*As late as the 1940's, the interior of St. Peter's Church was little changed from what it had been in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.*





*In 1948 Father Joyce significantly renovated the interior of St. Peter's Church*



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The following description was found in an issue of the *Rutland Herald* shortly before Christmas 1948:

Christmas will have a double meaning for the parishioners of St. Peter's Church this year when they file into a completely renovated building for midnight Mass tonight.

The new main altar of the church will be used for the first time when the Mass is sung tonight, the Rev. Robert F. Joyce, pastor, stated yesterday.

The interior of the church has been completely redecorated in warm light colors with buff predominating. The center ceiling is in gold tones with the motif of Christ the King.

Ceilings over the side aisles are in blue with a large number of diverse religious symbols in pure gold leaf.

Along the side walls there are painted angels, each bearing a shield representing one of the twelve Apostles.

The Stations of the Cross have been sunk into the side walls and integrated into the architecture of the building. They are shaded in deep red and with the bas-relief figures in ivory.

Inscriptions from Sacred Scripture play a prominent part in the decorative scheme. One series along the highest part of the church has to do with St. Peter; another, along the side walls, is connected with the Holy Eucharist and the character of Christ as the Good Shepherd; and a third series in the sanctuary itself is related to the Mass and the worship of God.

The three new altars were manufactured and installed by the Vermont Marble Company.

The main altar is of Vermont Westland cream marble with a background of Roxbury Verde antique. On the front are carvings of a chalice and host and also grapes and wheat.

The reredos, or back part of the main altar, is of selected white oak, all hand carved, and rises almost to the height of the church. In the center is a life-size sculptured wood statue of St. Peter and on the other side are to be four carved wood panels representing the Last Supper, the Multiplication of the Loaves, the Sacrifice of Melchisedech, and the first Mass in Vermont at Isle LaMotte. Over the altar is a canopy.

One side altar, devoted to the Sacred Heart, is of Red Vermont oriental marble and will be surmounted by an oak tryptych with three scenes from Christ's life.

The Lady altar is of Vermont Pavonazza marble, white with a blue cloud, elaborately carved. It will be surmounted with drapes to make it an attractive shrine.

The sanctuary is enclosed in selected oak panels with carved oak furniture. It contains an oak and wrought iron altar rail. The floor is covered with a green carpet.

A completely new lighting system has been installed which com-



bines the efficient and artistic in the use of both down lights and lantern. In every corner of the church is ample light for reading.

The new kneeling cushions have been placed in the pews. Red leather covered doors have been fixed in the three inner entrances.

A new Baptistry has been built in the main vestibule, where a marble Baptismal Font with a bronze cover has been placed.

Redecorating, started last June, has been under the direction of the firm of Rambusch of New York, decorators and architects who have designed and renovated churches in all parts of the United States.

Ninety percent of the work is completed, Father Joyce said, adding that the total cost will slightly exceed \$100,000.00.

According to the church pastor, work still to be done includes new pews and a new floor, both of which will be installed during 1949.

New confessionals are nearing completion, new outside doors are to be made and two shrines of St. Anthony and St. Anne will be placed in the rear of the church.

A restroom is being provided in the tower vestibule. New plumbing and heating is in process. The sacristy is furnished with entirely new vestments and storage cases.

On the Saturday after Thanksgiving Day, November 25, 1950, a storm of hurricane intensity ripped its way into Rutland from the south. It started to rain early in the afternoon and the wind began to blow. About 5:00 PM, the real storm began. From then until midnight it raged; at full fury the winds were recorded at times at 75 miles per hour. About 2 ½ inches of rain fell. Trees were uprooted, falling on houses; roofs were ripped off. This hurricane caused damage estimated to have been greater than that caused by the hurricane of 1938.<sup>45</sup>

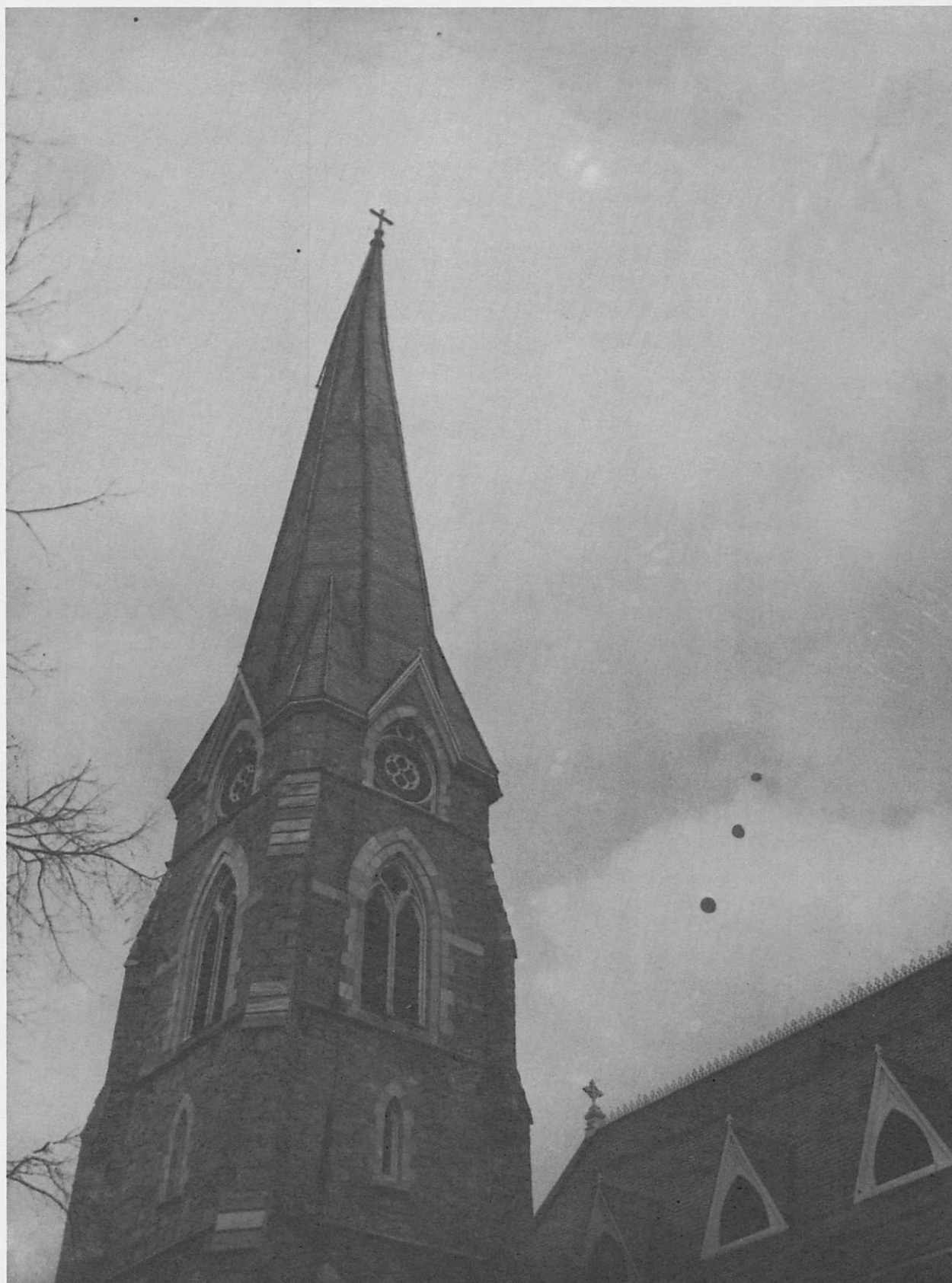
The high steeple of St. Peter's church was cracked and bent, or twisted badly, at the height of the storm. The heavy timbers of the beams were damaged. The pro's and con's of repairing it were discussed by Father Joyce and Bishop Ryan. But Bishop Ryan decided against the repair of the steeple. The damaged steeple was torn down and the tower was capped.

In 1968, Father Connor had a new vestibule entrance added to the church near the sacristy. This ground level entrance was a boon to those who had difficulty climbing stairs.

In 1969, new exterior electric lights were installed to light the steps leading to the front entrance and the new side entrance. Work was also done replacing some of the old steam pipes underneath the floor of the church.

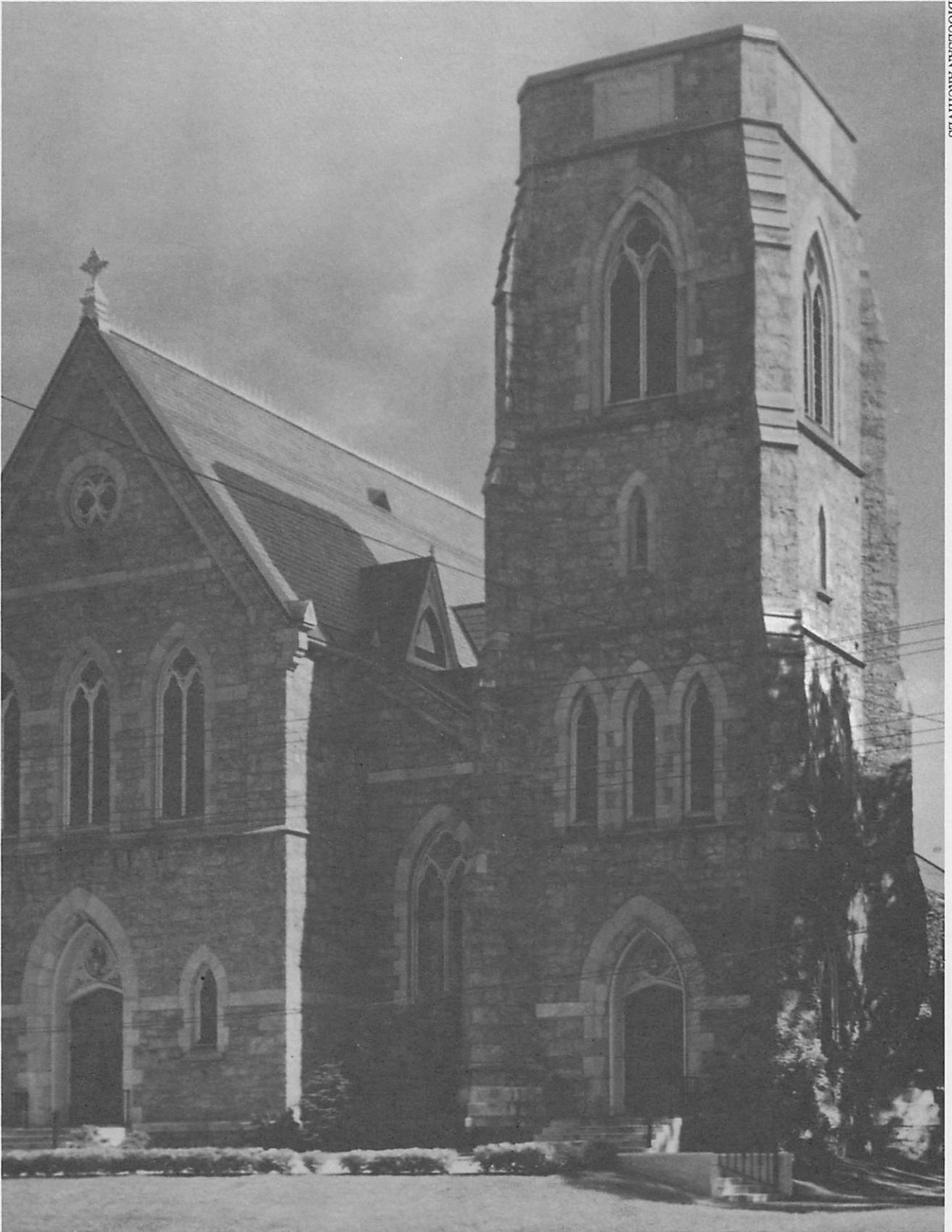
In 1969, a parking lot on the west side of Meadow Street, opposite the rectory, was made by filling in the embankment.





*The original steeple of St. Peter's Church was cracked by a storm in 1950.*





*In 1951 the cracked steeple of St. Peter's Church was removed and the tower was covered with a flat roof. Replacement of the steeple was considered too expensive.*



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- <sup>1</sup> *History of the Catholic Church, New England States*, Vol. II, p. 547
- <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 547
- <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 547
- <sup>4</sup> Hemenway, *Historical Gazetteer*, Vol. III, p. 1048
- <sup>5</sup> Rutland Land Records, Vol. 19, p. 435
- <sup>6</sup> Rutland Land Records, Vol. 26, p. 284 and *Rutland Herald*, February 21 and 27, 1865
- <sup>7</sup> *Rutland Herald*, February 21-27, 1865
- <sup>8</sup> *Rutland Herald* for these dates
- <sup>9</sup> *Rutland Herald*, October 15, 1871
- <sup>10</sup> *Rutland Herald*, July 19, 1871, June 22, July 4 and 6, 1872 and *Rutland Independent* July 22, 1871
- <sup>11</sup> *Rutland Herald*, January 22, 1872
- <sup>12</sup> Rutland Land Records, Vol. 27, p. 466 and *Rutland Herald*, February 7, 1867
- <sup>13</sup> *Beer's Map of the Village of Rutland*, 1869
- <sup>14</sup> *Rutland Herald*, March 29, 1873
- <sup>15</sup> Hemenway, *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, Vol. III p. 1049
- <sup>16</sup> *Rutland Globe*, June 30, 1873
- <sup>17</sup> Bishop DeGoesbriand's Diary
- <sup>18</sup> *Rutland Herald*, October 28, 1870
- <sup>19</sup> *Rutland Herald*, September 4, 1871
- <sup>20</sup> *Rutland Herald*, September 11, 1872
- <sup>21</sup> *Rutland Herald*, March 3, 1873
- <sup>22</sup> *Rutland Herald*, April 14 and 16, 1873
- <sup>23</sup> *History of the Catholic Church, New England States*, Vol. II, p. 548
- <sup>24</sup> Annual Parish Report for 1874
- <sup>25</sup> *Rutland Globe*, June 30, 1873
- <sup>26</sup> A fresco is a painting on freshly spread, moist plaster.
- <sup>27</sup> *Rutland Herald*, May 27, 1873
- <sup>28</sup> Bishop's Diary June 29, 1873
- <sup>29</sup> *Rutland Herald*, June 30, 1873 and *Rutland Globe*, June 30, 1873
- <sup>30</sup> *Rutland Herald*, April 1873
- <sup>31</sup> Annual Parish Report for the Year 1873
- <sup>32</sup> *Illustrated Atlas of Vermont*, 1876, p. 85
- <sup>33</sup> Annual Parish Report for the Year 1883
- <sup>34</sup> *Rutland Herald*, December 17, 1883
- <sup>35</sup> Annual Parish Report for the Year 1884
- <sup>36</sup> *Rutland Herald*, January 10, 1887
- <sup>37</sup> *Rutland Herald*, April 20, 1887
- <sup>38</sup> *Rutland Herald*, May 16 and June 10, 1887
- <sup>39</sup> *Rutland Herald*, July 4 and 5, 1887
- <sup>40</sup> *Rutland Herald*, May 16, 1887, June 5, October 24, November 29, 1888
- <sup>41</sup> Annual Parish Report for the Year 1891 and *Rutland Herald*, November 17, 1891
- <sup>42</sup> *Rutland Herald*, February 19, 1891
- <sup>43</sup> *Rutland Herald*, September 22, 1892
- <sup>44</sup> *Rutland Herald*, April 1, 1886
- <sup>45</sup> *Rutland Herald*, November 27 and 28, 1950



### St. Peter's Parochial School

Soon after the arrival of the first Catholic families, some of the children of school age began to attend the common school in their district. At that time there was no state law of compulsory attendance at school. But many Irish families wanted their children to obtain an education.

However, they did have strong objections to a few religious practices found in the schools. When the Catholics arrived here, the religion of most of the parents of the children in school was Protestant. Although there were several denominations among them, it was agreed that no particular denomination's tenets were to be taught in the school. But by mutual agreement the school day began with a prayer and a reading from the Protestant version of the Bible; and sometimes the singing of a hymn.

Catholics were strictly forbidden to read from a Protestant Bible. The Douay Version was the only Bible acceptable to Catholics. Here were the beginnings of a conflict; "the immovable object and the irresistible force." This, and the use of Protestant prayers, caused difficulties between Protestants and Catholics. In some places it was obligatory for the Catholic children to own a Protestant Bible if they wished to attend school. Not to possess a Protestant Bible was excuse enough for expulsion from school.

The readers [or reading books] often contained excerpts from the Protestant Bible, as for example, the Ten Commandments, which the children were obliged to memorize and recite in class. This, too, was a cause of difficulties. Recourse to the school committee was listened to politely but the situation did not change.

The following example, which existed in Brattleboro, portrays the situation for Catholic families. There the Catholic children could not attend Mass on a Holy Day for Catholics when it interfered with their attendance at school. In 1874, the Catholic children who did attend Mass on the Feast of Corpus Christi [then one of the Holy Days of Obligation] and the Feast of the Immaculate Conception on December 8, were not allowed to attend school for the rest of the term. [A school term was usually 12 weeks long.] They might return to school at the beginning of the next term provided their parents promised that the children would be in school, Holy Day or not, when the opening bell rang. [There were 4 or 5 times in the school year when a Holy Day would occur during the week].<sup>1</sup>

For these reasons and perhaps others, as soon as Catholics were numerous enough to build a local church, they almost always built a parochial school soon afterwards in order to educate their children according to their own beliefs as well as to give them a sound secular education. The common, or public, schools of those days were not the same as the public schools of a later period when most of these conditions changed.

In 1855, Father Druon built the first Catholic church in Rutland on Meadow Street, near the corner of West Street. On November 10, 1855, Father Druon purchased a house and lot on West Street [now #273] from Frederick Chaffee for \$500.00 which was to be used as a schoolhouse.<sup>2</sup>

It is not known for certain that it opened for classes for the winter term in 1855



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[The winter term usually began about the first of December]. However, it is probable that it did with about 50 pupils and a lay teacher.

From a reference in the report of the superintendent of schools for East Parish, Rutland, for the year 1856, it is clear that the Catholic school was in session in 1856. In the superintendent's report on March 12, 1857, he wrote: "There are 12 school districts in East Parish, Rutland, containing 1066 children of legal school age. ...Only 650 pupils have attended the schools during the winter. ...If we add to the number stated, the number of scholars in the *Romish school*, there still remains 300 children who have not attended any school during the winter....<sup>3</sup> This calculation meant that 116 children had attended the Catholic school. Of course there was no state law compelling school attendance at all.

According to the annual Parish Report for the parish, in 1857 there was an average attendance of about 60 children; in 1858, 75 attended; in 1861, 110 attended; in 1882, 150 attended.

The schoolhouse was becoming much too small for this number of children. It became more difficult to teach and keep discipline. One can readily imagine that the teachers [2 by now] were exhausted at the end of the school day.

During the school year of 1864-65, Father Boylan decided that a new school was a necessity. He made arrangements with the school committee of the district school [probably School Street] for the temporary use of their building until the new Catholic school was built. A Catholic teacher was to conduct the classes.<sup>4</sup> On June 1, 1865, at the close of the spring term, the old schoolhouse at 273 West Street was sold to William Sammon for \$450.00.<sup>5</sup>

In February, 1867, the parish bought the Ledge lot on the corner of Mechanic and Meadow Streets. Soon after acquiring it, Father Boylan began to erect the new school with the help of the parishioners. The southwest corner of the lot was used. The work was well underway in July and progressed rapidly. The new school was able to open its doors to the Catholic children for the fall term of 1867.<sup>6</sup>

Mr. Aiken, the superintendent of schools for East Parish, Rutland, had this to say in his report published in the *Rutland Herald*, March 23, 1868:

Attendance in the district school by terms:

		Primary	Elementary	High School
Spring	1867	427	324	109
Fall	1867	300	250	111
Winter	1867	285	288	135

It will be seen that there was a large falling off in the attendance of the Primary and Secondary Departments, comparing the attendance of the Fall with that of the Spring term. This was occasioned by the opening of a private school, at no small expense, in the western part of the village for the separate instruction of the children and youth of our Catholic fellow citizens.

The cost of the structure according to the *Herald* of February 1, 1868, was \$7,500.00. In the annual parish reports for 1868, 1869 and 1870, it is recorded that there were 250 children in attendance each year. In 1871, and 1872 there were 230 scholars.



With the completion of the present St. Peter's Church, the schoolhouse was converted into the new Rectory and the old St. Peter's Church on Meadow Street was enlarged and refitted into a schoolhouse. A wooden addition, containing 2 classrooms, was built at the rear of the old brick church. The first day of school was September 16, 1873.<sup>7</sup>

Beginning with the fall term of 1873, the Sisters of St. Joseph became the teachers in St. Peter's School. Father Boylan had obtained five sisters of St. Joseph from Flushing, New York. They had arrived in Rutland on September 7, 1873.<sup>8</sup>

Since the beginning of the school in 1855 or 1856, no mention was ever made in the *Herald* of any closing exercises at the end of the school year. It is very likely that on the last day of the school year the children were given their reports with the notation "passing" or "not passing." But with the presence of the sisters, commencement exercises were held at the close of the first school year. The *Herald* of July 11, 1874 gave this account:

The first annual commencement exercises of St. Peter's School were held last night at St. Peter's Academy on Meadow Street. The hall was crowded to its utmost capacity by parents and friends of the pupils. It was tastefully decorated with flags and evergreens. A temporary stage was erected at the west end. In the rear of the stage was suspended a large American flag, while a flag of smaller dimensions was festooned from each side. The pupils occupied seats on either side and in the rear of the stage.

The exercises were opened by a selection performed by St. Peter's Band. This was followed by a welcome song, sung by the young ladies comprising the senior classes. Next came the Salutatory by Miss M. Sheridan. This was delivered in a very prepossessing manner and with good effect.

This was followed by a scene entitled "The Genius of Liberty" in which Miss M. A. Clifford took the part of the Goddess of Liberty; Master J. Clarke, the part of Henry Clay; and Master James Clarke, that of John C. Calhoun. Each one sustained their parts with much ability and this scene was one of the most effective pieces on the program.

Miss M. Clifford, one of the juvenile class, sang very prettily "The Acorn Song."

The principal feature of the evening program was the drama "Germaine's Cousin, or Little Shepherdess." The little drama conveys a moral that was made very apparent by the excellent manner in which each one took his or her part. It was well received by the audience and roundly applauded.

The next tableau, in which appeared "The Maid of Erin" represented by Miss M. Kelliher and a number of angels surrounding a cross, had a splendid effect and was one of the most pleasing exhibitions of the evening.

After a very pretty and altogether pleasing vocal solo entitled "Ships on Fire" sung by Miss F. Keenan, Reverend Father Boylan made



a brief address to the pupils. He alluded to their year's study that had just closed, and complimented them highly on their perseverance and energy in study, and also congratulated them on their success. He then turned to the audience and thanked the parents of the children for their hearty cooperation in the work of educating the children and for the interest they took in all that pertained to their success in study.

After the address, Father Boylan distributed to the children of the several classes, awards of merit. These awards were composed entirely of books to 63 girls and 24 boys. After these awards were all distributed, four young ladies were successively called up and on each of their heads was placed a crown as a mark of especial merit.

After the song "I'll Be a Farmer" by Master J. Sabourin, the valedictory was pronounced by Miss M. Cummings. The conclusion of the exercise was a farewell song by the Senior class.

Thus the first commencement of St. Peter's School gives promise of a brilliant future for the school and those engaged therein.

During these early years, one or two lay teachers assisted the sisters. In 1874, and also 1876, Miss Bridget O'Neil was mentioned as a teacher in the parish reports. In 1886, a Miss Sheridan, a lay teacher, was named in the parish report of that year. The *Rutland Herald* of June 30, 1876, describes another such commencement:

The entertainment of the pupils of St. Peter's School in the Baxter Music Hall last night was one of the most successful performances of the kind that we have seen. The following is the program:

March: by the Band

Chorus: "Gloria" from High Mass – Mozart

Prologue: Grandpa's Birthday

Sir Thomas More (A tragedy in Five Acts):

Dramatis personae

Henry VIII

Master T. Lynch

Duke of Norfolk

Master J. Clarke

Sir Thomas More

Master F. Kelley

William (More's son)

Master T. Kingsley

Sir Alford Atherton

Master P. McDonough

Chorus

Centennial Drama:

Isabella

Miss M. Cawley

Elizabeth Tudor

Miss K. Flynn

Mary Stuart

Miss M.A. Sheridan

Maria

Miss M. Hynes

America

Miss M.A. Clifford

Muse of History

Miss F. Keenan

Valedictory

Miss K. Flynn

Bishop DeGoesbriand distributed prizes and first bestowed upon Miss Kate Flynn a graduating gold medal and concluded by placing a wreath upon the brow of four young ladies. At the conclusion of the regu-



lar program, the Bishop spoke briefly and the exercises were closed by the full chorus singing "The Red, White and Blue." ...The program was eminently successful; the performers were heartily applauded; and the children all carried themselves with the utmost decorum and grace.

During these years 1873 to 1885, the school registered between 325 and 375 children.

But the old school [formerly the church] began to show signs of wear and tear. The building had become quite dilapidated by the early 1880's. Father Boylan on November 30, 1882, bought the property of Mrs. Bridget McDonough, just south of the present rectory, to build a new school. The property cost \$1,300.00.<sup>9</sup>

Having finished the construction of Mt. St. Joseph's Convent in 1882, Father Boylan began to turn his thoughts, and the thoughts of his parishioners, to a new school. Having acquired the property, he next had a subscription drive for funds for all the materials needed. The annual Catholic Ladies' Bazaar would augment the amount raised by subscription by \$2,135.00. He borrowed \$1,350.00 from William Enright and the Wales Street property was sold for \$800.00. In February 1883, Father Boylan announced that the digging of the cellar and foundation would begin. The men of the parish, young and old, came with their picks, shovels and horses to begin the construction.<sup>10</sup>

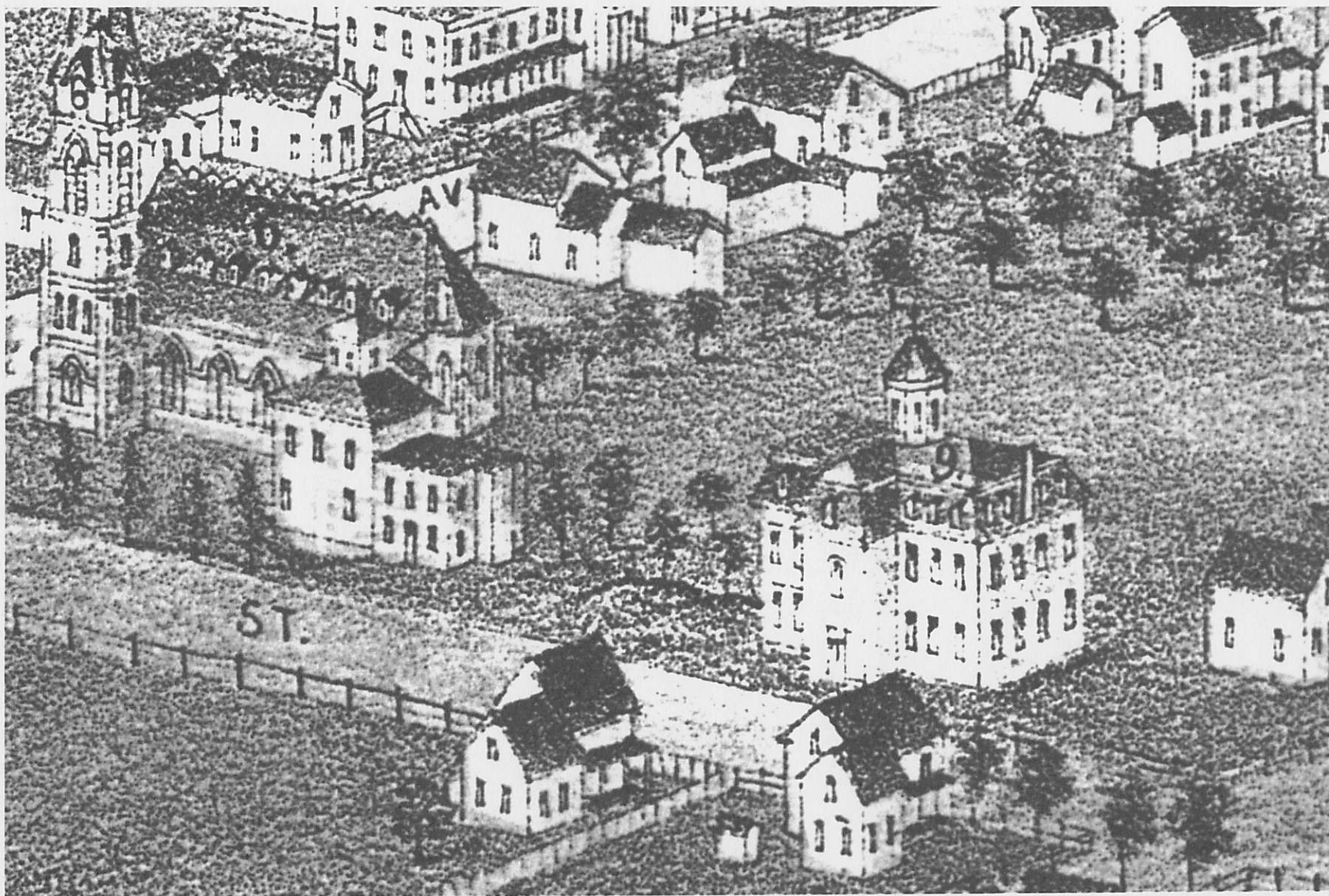
Once the foundation was laid, then the masons and their helpers began to lay the red bricks and the exterior walls began to rise, finally reaching the height of two stories. The school was to be cruciform in shape, with the east and west arms being shorter than the north and south arms. There were to be six classrooms in the building – three upstairs and three downstairs. The upstairs classrooms were destined for the girls, while the boys were downstairs.

By the end of November 1883, the building was nearly complete and the expectation was that it would be ready for occupancy by January 1, 1884. The building cost about \$15,000.00.<sup>11</sup> On December 15, 1883, when the bells for St. Peter's Church were blessed, a fourth bell, which was named St. Aloysius and weighed 150 pounds, was also blessed for the new school.<sup>12</sup> When the school was opened two classes occupied each room.

While all this work was being done on the western side of town, Father Boylan was cognizant of the fact that the Catholics on the east side of the village were growing more numerous, especially since the advent of the Howe Scale Company in 1877-78. The children of this area deserved a school in the neighborhood so they would not have the long walk across town to attend St. Peter's School. Accordingly on December 17, 1884, Father Boylan bought a house and lot on Green Street from Peter J. Mullin for \$1,500.00 for a future schoolhouse.<sup>13</sup>

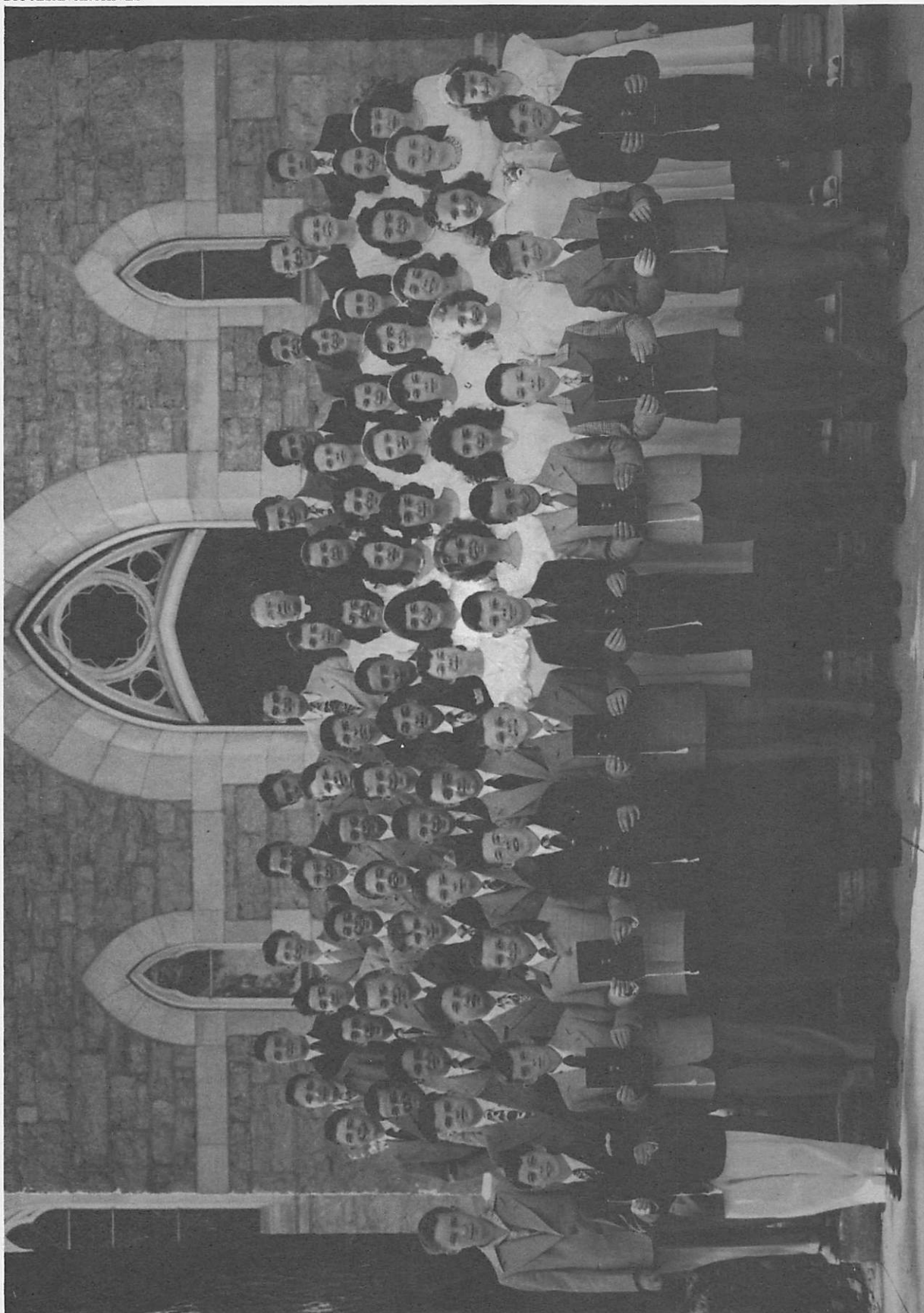
For the fall term of 1886, St. Mary's School on Green Street [now Killington Avenue] opened its doors. It had cost \$6,000.00 to build this school which was staffed by Sisters from Mt. St. Joseph's Convent, who daily rode back and forth in "a surrey with the fringe on top" which was driven by the Sexton, Mr. Flynn. It was said that if the horse was frightened and became balky, the sisters would pray: "St. Joseph save us." But years later, on an occasion when the horse was acting up, one of the sisters cried to the driver: "Mr. Barker save us."





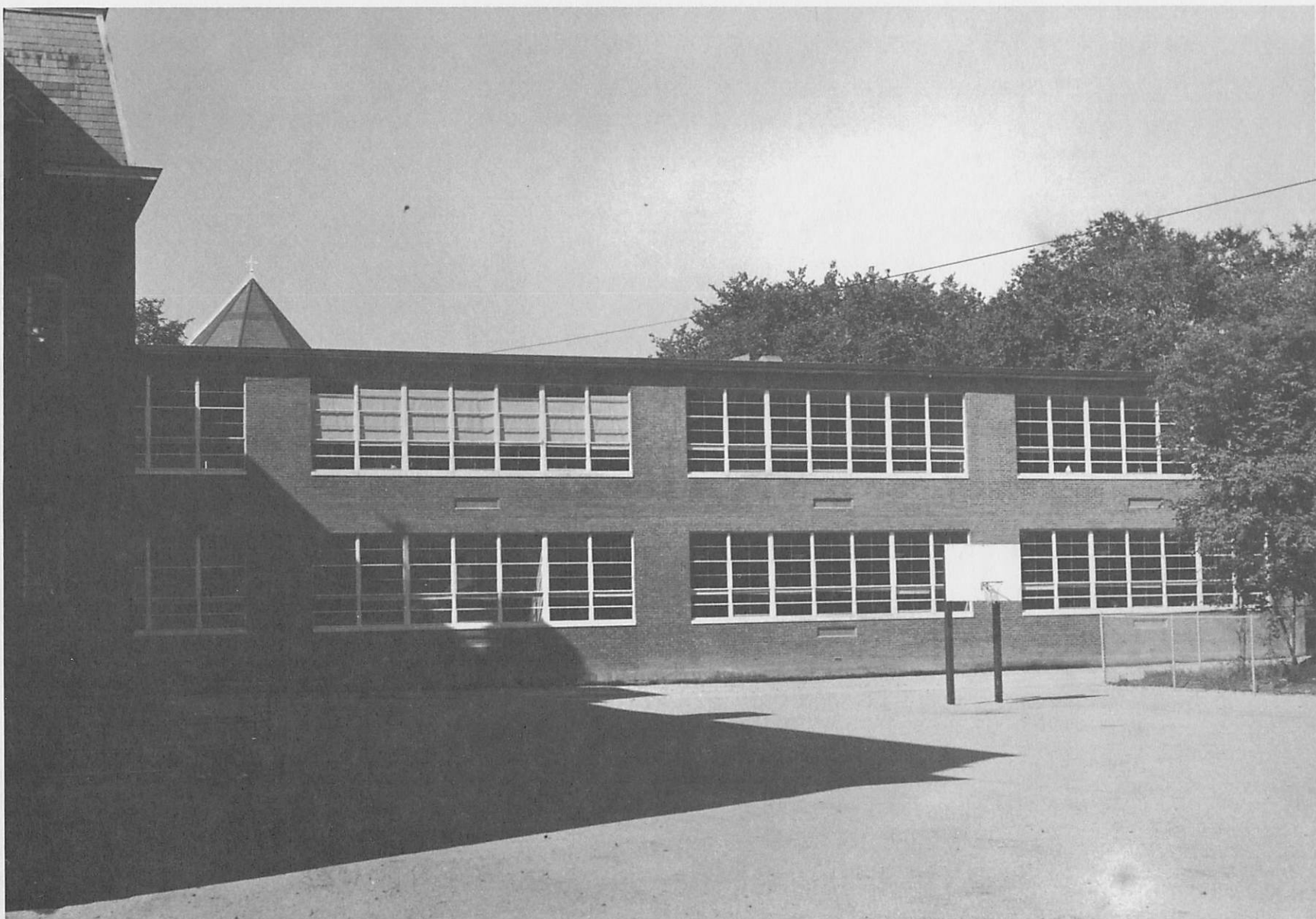
*St. Peter's School quickly outgrew its home in the old St. Peter's Church on Meadow Street. A new St. Peter's School was built in 1883 on the northeast corner of River and Meadow Streets. This 1885 sketch shows the building on Meadow Street just south of the church and the rectory. Early photographs of the building seem to be non-existent.*





*The 1948 graduating class of St. Peter's School stands on the steps of the church with Father Joyce.*





*In 1950 a six-classroom addition to St. Peter's School was built.*



With the two Catholic schools, attendance grew. In 1889, the attendance was 475; in 1890, it was 500; in 1901, it was 600; in 1902, it was 650.

In 1898, the growth at St. Peter's School necessitated the building of an addition on the school. At a cost of \$7,500.00, Father Gaffney added to the south arm of the school a two-story addition which housed four classrooms, two upstairs and two downstairs. The parish report of that year states that: "He paid for it all without any charge against the congregation, on condition that half of the cost, without interest, will be paid to me should I ever need it. With my death, this debt will be cancelled."

But when was the hall on the third floor added? In the April 23, 1887, issue of the *Rutland Herald* this item appeared:

"The gymnasium and club rooms of the Young Men's Catholic Union in the school building on Meadow Street are almost completed and are in use every night, and its members exercise almost every day." Older graduates of St. Peter's School remember the hall as a place where the students gathered on Friday mornings to practice the hymns to be sung at the next Sunday's children's Mass at 9:00AM. It was also the place where the final examinations were held; plays and pageants were performed; and where the St. Peter's Cadets drilled their "right face" and "shoulder arms" about 1915-1916 and later when the cadets were reactivated in 1925 and 1926. It was also the scene of many basketball games.

In 1900, the floor in the basement of the school was cemented. Here students gathered before the 9:00AM Sunday Mass and also before the 4:00PM Benediction to line up for the walk to the church for these services.

After the erection of Holy Innocent's Parish [now Christ the King Parish], the number of children in the St. Peter's Parochial School was 400. In 1911 it was 485, in 1914 it was 545, with an additional 100 in the Convent school. In 1917 there were 600 students in St. Peter's School and 130 in the Convent school. In 1920 St. Peter's School had 594 students and the Convent school had 217.

In 1923, the school was wired for electricity. In 1930, the school was painted and plumbing work was done. Nothing outstanding, except for the ordinary repairs and improvements, seems to have been done during the depression and the World War II years.

For recreation there were two handball alleys, back to back, east of the south wing which offered the boys many hours of enjoyment before and after school. An outdoor basketball court occupies the spot where these alleys once stood.

In 1950, a six-classroom addition on the north end of the school was built and the old building was completely renovated.



## Chapter 4 St. Peter's Parochial School

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<sup>1</sup> See the *Vermont Phoenix* from June to December 31, 1874

<sup>2</sup> Rutland Land Records, Vol. 19, p. 547

<sup>3</sup> *Rutland Herald*, March 12, 1957, p. 1

<sup>4</sup> Annual Parish Report for the year 1865

<sup>5</sup> Rutland Land Records, Vol. 26, p. 204

<sup>6</sup> *Rutland Herald*, July 20, 1867

<sup>7</sup> *Rutland Globe*, September 8, 1873

<sup>8</sup> *Rutland Herald*, September 9, 1873

<sup>9</sup> Rutland Land Records, Book 41, p. 659

<sup>10</sup> Annual Parish Report for the year 1882

<sup>11</sup> *Rutland Herald*, November 26, 1883

<sup>12</sup> *Rutland Herald*, December 12, 1883

<sup>13</sup> Annual Parish Report for the year 1883 and Rutland Land Records, Vol. 45, p. 729



Mt. St. Joseph Convent

When the new church was completed and the schoolhouse beside it had become the rectory, the old rectory on Meadow Street was now available become a convent. It had long been Father Boylan's dream to have the Sisters of St. Joseph teach in his school.<sup>1</sup>

Father Boylan had two cousins who were members of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Early in the summer of 1873, he wrote to the superior at the Motherhouse in Flushing, Long Island, New York, to ask for some nuns. But a letter came back to him informing him that she could not see her way clear to send him any at this time.<sup>2</sup>

With all possible haste, Father Boylan took the train for New York and presented himself to the superior of the Flushing Convent to beg her to send a few sisters to his parish. So well did he plead his case that she gave him permission to speak to the community to ask for volunteers.<sup>3</sup>

As a result of his sincere appeal, Mother Austin and Sisters Irene, Patricia, Anastasia and Paul volunteered to come to Rutland. Father Boylan was elated at this news and returned to Rutland with plans to redecorate the old rectory into a suitable convent, since the old church was being outfitted as a school.<sup>4</sup>

When the convent was ready, the five sisters left Flushing on September 5, 1873, for their new foundation and arrived in Rutland on September 6, 1873. The school opened on September 16, 1873.<sup>5</sup>

For almost a year and a half the old rectory served as the convent. But on January 21, 1875, while the sisters were teaching school, the building caught on fire from a defective flue. About 11:00 AM, the fire department was called and within a few minutes the horse-drawn engines and the hook and ladder were on the scene. Going directly to East Creek, a few rods west of the house, the firemen quickly cut holes in the ice and soon had a stream of water on the fire. The flames were confined to the roof. Owing to the amount of snow on the roof, it burned slowly.

Neighbors quickly removed the furniture and all moveable goods before the house was deluged with water. Mrs. James Donahue of Forest Street suffered a broken wrist while helping with the removal of the furniture.

The roof was entirely burned off and when it burned the chimney fell in. This, with a portion of the upper floor, was all the damage that was done, except by water.<sup>6</sup>

Father Boylan invited the sisters to occupy the parochial residence until other arrangements could be made. For himself he found other quarters temporarily. There was insurance on the convent of \$1,000.00 on the house and \$600.00 on the furniture.<sup>7</sup>

By now the Catholic parishes in Brattleboro and Bennington had asked for sisters to staff their schools. At the beginning, the foundation in Rutland was but a mission of the St. Joseph Convent in Flushing, Long Island, New York. For vacations the sisters went back to Flushing and the assignment of the sisters was made there also. On August 17, 1875, Bishop DeGoesbriand asked Mother Teresa, the Flushing superior, to found a separate novitiate in East Rutland. The Bishop in his diary, under the date of August 17, 1875, wrote: "The Sisters of St. Joseph of East Rutland are



separated from the Flushing Convent and become a diocesan order." Sister Philip McDonough was sent by Mother Teresa to be the first Superior General of the Rutland, Vermont, foundation. The convent in Rutland thus became the Motherhouse for the sisters stationed in Vermont.<sup>8</sup>

New young ladies joined the Sisters of St. Joseph yearly. The following description of the first religious reception and profession in Rutland was found in the *Rutland Herald* of March 19, 1877. It serves as a model for the many other religious receptions and professions that would follow.

St. Peter's Catholic Church was filled to overflowing yesterday afternoon, the galleries and the body of the church being crowded with Protestants and Catholics who had gathered to witness the solemn and impressive ceremony of taking the veil and receiving the cross. The day chosen was the feast of St. Joseph. This was the first time that such a ceremony had been performed in the church, if not in the state. The postulants, or the young ladies who were taking the veil, were Miss Mary Anna Sheridan of Rutland, Miss Mary Grace O'Connell of New York City, and Miss Lizzie Teresa Dixon of Brooklyn, New York. The novices were Sister M. Anastasia, Sister Miriam and Sister M. Antoinette. The officiating clergymen were the Right Reverend Bishop DeGoesbriand, assisted by the Very Reverend Thomas Lynch, V.G., and the Reverend C. Boylan. Others in attendance were Fathers McLaughlin, O'Dwyer, Lane, O'Reilly, Cunningham, Gaffney, O'Carroll, Sullivan and Gelot of this state and McDonnell of Whitehall, N.Y. and Cunningham of Albany, N.Y. and Goodwin of Maine.

The only decorations for the occasion in this beautiful church were about the altar where the flowers and lighted tapers presented a fine appearance. At about 2:30 PM the services commenced. The organ pealed forth a sweet lay to St. Joseph, and the procession entering the door passed slowly up the center aisle. A young lady carrying the cross, followed by six little girls bearing a silver basket containing the Profession Crosses and two other baskets in which were the black habits and veils, preceded the sacred brides. The Postulants were attired in white satin, wreaths of orange blossoms adorning their heads and fastening their bridal veils in place. The dresses of the cross and basket bearers were white trimmed with white blossoms. Each Novice and Postulant was accompanied by two bridesmaids, dressed in the same white substance, with white ivory veils, and buds and flowers of the same hue. Reaching the altar rail, the three young ladies who were to take the veil, knelt on the prie-dieus placed there and listened to a very solemn and impressive discourse by the Right Reverend Bishop. The sermon dealt with the nature of the vows they were about to take and extolled the beauties of a life devoted entirely to God. After the sermon the young ladies answered the questions put to them by the Bishop, their habits and veils contained in the baskets were blessed, and the youthful brides bade adieu to the pomp and vanities of the world. Returning down the aisle in the same



order in which they had entered, they retired to the tower room of the church to change their bridal robes for the somber novice costumes. During the interval which followed, the choir sang some selections from Rossini. On their return the young ladies, now novices, again knelt on the prie-dieus and received the blessing of the Right Reverend Bishop with the following names by which they will hereafter be known: Miss Sheridan, Sister St. Joseph; Miss O'Connell, Sister Mary Teresa; Miss Dixon, Sister Mary. The novices next proceeded to the holy altar bearing lighted candles, led by the Reverend Mother. Entering the sanctuary and kneeling at the feet of the Right Reverend Bishop they begged to make their profession in the congregation. After they had answered the questions put by the Bishop, he then addressed Mother Mary Philip as to their desires. She answered for them in the name of the community. They then recited their act of profession, forever renouncing the vanities and pleasures of the world. The Holy Cross was given them then by the Right Reverend Bishop after which the Mother conducted them back to their places. The spectacle of these young women consecrating themselves wholly and entirely by these temporary vows, given in clear and reverent tones, was most impressive. In conclusion the "Te Deum" was sung, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament given and the youthful sisters knelt in prayer until the assembly had departed. Their relatives and friends awaited them at the convent where the new novices were able to visit with them.

The Motherhouse has been established at Rutland since September, under the supervision of the worthy pastor, Reverend Boylan. There are two other missions subordinated to the one in Rutland, at Bennington and Brattleboro. All these schools are in a flourishing condition, reflecting much credit upon the management.<sup>9</sup>

On December 24, 1877, this ceremony was again held in the chapel of the Sisters of St. Joseph. The Right Reverend Bishop officiated, and in his sermon he set forth the obligations of the religious state and the many advantages it affords. Miss Mary Vitta became known in religion as Sister St. Charles and Miss Rose Bracken as Sister Mary Agnes. Both were from Brooklyn, N.Y. Because of her friendship with Sister Mary James Russell, who was stationed here, Miss Vitta decided to enter the Rutland convent<sup>10</sup>

On August 19, 1879, another reception and profession took place in the Rectory-Convent at 10:30 AM. The novices who made their final vows and forever consecrated themselves to God, to works of mercy, to the education of youth, and to lives of abnegation and piety were Sister St. Joseph of Rutland and Sister Mary Magdalen of Dublin, Ireland. The postulants for the habit of the order were Miss Maggie Sheridan of Rutland, in religion Sister Mary Louis; and Miss Mary Lahey [or Leahy] of Bennington, Vermont, in religion Sister Mary Francis.<sup>11</sup> In the absence of the Bishop, the Reverend Charles J. Boylan was appointed to officiate. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was then given and the ceremonies were at an end.

One other such ceremony took place in St. Peter's Church and was recorded in



the *Rutland Herald* of October 14, 1881. At this ceremony the following Novices made their final vows: Sisters M. Eugenia, Mary Peter, and Mary Ignatius. The postulant was Miss Mary Cashon of Burlington, Vermont, in religion, Sister Mary Cecelia. Bishop DeGoesbriand officiated.

Father Boylan did not dilly-dally about a new motherhouse for the Sisters of St. Joseph. It was not long after the fire at the original convent at 21 Meadow Street, that he, with Mother Mary Philip, the Superior General, began to plan the new building. Being a wise and prudent pastor, it was necessary to have the where-with-all to buy materials and to pay for the skilled labor. A subscription drive for funds was held. The annual parish fair; the Hibernian Society picnic in July, and whatever personal funds [Christmas collection and stole fees] he could raise, were also assigned to this purpose.

On September 8, 1876, the burned-out convent on Meadow Street was sold to John and Thomas Caden for \$1,000.00. However since Father Boylan owed them \$400.00 on money he had borrowed, the parish realized \$600.00 from the sale<sup>12</sup>

In 1874, Father Boylan had bought the property on which the convent building now stands. On June 6, 1874, he bought from Thomas C. Hubbard, the lot on the corner of Mechanic and Meadow Streets for \$800.00. The house lot just east of this corner lot was bought from James C. Jones for \$2,000.00 on June 12, 1874. [Perhaps this latter house became the rectory after the convent fire.]<sup>13</sup>

With this for a start, Father Boylan began, as he wrote in his annual report for 1876: "collecting material for the proposed new convent." According to that report he bought hardware sundries [windows, doors, lumber, and lime for the convent] for a total amount spent of \$847.00.

Once his plans for the building were set, he then had to get his workers. Tradition has it that he issued a call from the pulpit. A note among the records at Mt. St. Joseph's Convent states: "Ground was broken for the new convent on July 4, 1876. The men of the parish brought their teams and dug out the foundation gratis. The work progressed slowly owing to a scarcity of funds, and where those funds came from only goodness knows. The building was not completed for a number of years."<sup>14</sup> Under the column entitled "Debts" in the 1876 annual parish report there is the notation, "Pat Cummings, brick-layer, \$450.00. Perhaps there were others who had worked but had been paid up before the end of the year. The bricks for the building came from Chaffee's Lumber Yard.

There is a story handed down from the old parishioners that when they saw the dimensions of the proposed convent, some of them referred to it as "Boylan's Folly." The four-story building seemed way too large for the eight nuns then housed in Rutland.

In 1877 and 1878, Richard Flynn and Barney Devine joined Patrick Cummings in the reports of these years as being owed money. No doubt many more of the parishioners either donated their day a week or had been paid by Father Boylan as money became available.

In 1879, again Father Boylan bought more bricks, lime and lumber, and he spent \$5,643.00 on the new building. On July 7, 1879, the *Rutland Herald* had an account of the activities surrounding the blessing and laying of the cornerstone of the new Convent:



The ceremony of blessing and laying the cornerstone of St. Joseph's Convent occurred on July 4. About 9:00 AM, a procession formed at the Depot Park, consisting of the Young Ladies Sodality of Bennington and the Ancient Order of Hibernians, headed by the Sarsfield Band (13 pieces) of West Rutland. They marched to St. Peter's Church where a High Mass was celebrated. The following members of the Catholic Clergy were present: The Right Reverend O'Sullivan of Brandon; O'Carroll of Fair Haven; O'Dwyer of Bennington; O'Reilly of West Rutland; and Boylan of St. Peter's. The eloquent young priest of Brandon, Father McLaughlin, preached the sermon for the occasion. The Bishop followed with remarks germane to the occasion. After Mass, came the blessing of the cornerstone which was brought into the church for the occasion because of a rain shower. After the blessing, the cornerstone was carried to the new building and placed in position in the southwestern corner of the Convent structure.

The procession then formed and marched to Pierpoint's Grove where an enjoyable time was had in sports and recreation common to a picnic occasion.

In 1880 and 1881, work continued on the building. On this project Father Boylan spent \$7,661.00 in 1880, and \$4,681 in 1881. In 1881 the unfinished convent was insured for \$10,000.00.<sup>15</sup> Although the convent was not finished, the sisters moved into it on February 2, 1882.<sup>16</sup>

In the spring of 1882, Mt. St. Joseph Academy opened its doors. It was a girl's school and a boarding school. Five day-pupils and one boarder enrolled that spring.<sup>17</sup>

Sister Mary Cephas, S.S.J. in her thesis for her Masters Degree at St. Michael's College, Winooski, Vermont, August 10, 1945, wrote:

In 1886, there were ten boarders. For a number of years the enrollment of the school remained about 35. For the most part, the people were poor and could not allow their older children to stay in school. Skilled laborers received about \$1.25 a day; common working men even less. The families were large, and it was necessary to build their own homes. Consequently, as soon as the boys were old enough to earn, they were expected to contribute their share [to their families' expenses]. Usually they left school at the sixth grade level. ...Elementary school training seemed to be sufficient for the average girl, who left school at about the same time as the boys. Thereafter many of the parents whose children did not finish the grades, did not feel that they were financially able to pay the required tuition which at first was \$15.00 a year, then, raised to \$20.00 and later to \$25.00.

On August 2, 1882, the Feast of St. Alphonsus, the new convent and the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception were solemnly blessed. At 8:00 AM, the Right Reverend Bishop, attended by the Reverend Charles J. Boylan, and his assistant, the Reverend Henry Lane, met the sisters in St. Peter's Church. A procession was formed in the church and slowly marched to the "Mount," chanting the "Miserere" and other psalms. Father Boylan, with the consent of the Bishop, blessed the Convent and the





*A group of school children stand in front of the Mt. St. Joseph Convent on the northeast corner of Meadow and Mechanic Streets in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The Convent was completed in 1882.*



Chapel. Following this, the first Mass was offered in the new Chapel.

That afternoon the Bishop officiated at the first reception and profession in the new Chapel: Sister Mary Louis [Miss M. Sheridan of Rutland], Sister Mary Loretto [Miss Ann Dunne] and sister Mary Francis [Miss M. Leahy of Bennington] completed the sacrifice of themselves by taking the perpetual vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. A number of priests and relatives of the young ladies were present. The ceremony concluded with Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament.<sup>18</sup>

The number of Sisters of St. Joseph grew over the years from this modest beginning. Like the grain of mustard seed their number in 1886 was 20; in 1906, it was 45; and in 1966, it was 166.

The early days of the residence of the Sisters in Rutland were hard and difficult ones for them. Money was not plentiful; their salaries were meager. From September of 1873 to September of 1875, they were under the supervision of the Superior in Flushing, N.Y. Their salary from the parish was paid to that superior and their support came from their motherhouse. Unquestionably, many of the parishioners of St. Peter's Parish brought in food for their table. When the ladies were canning in the fall, some of their preserves, canned fruits, etc., were set aside for the good sisters. Potatoes from the gardens, and other vegetables that would keep, were donated. When someone slaughtered a pig or a cow, or chickens, some was given to the sisters. In 1877, the annual parish report states that the parish paid the sisters \$750.00 and owed them another \$800.00. In 1879, the sisters' salaries were listed at \$600.00.

Living in the rectory from 1875 to 1882, the sisters had no ground around it on which to raise their own garden. However, once they got in the new convent they did buy a strip of land on the north side of their property from Michael and Mary Lynch in June of 1884, which no doubt became their garden. On December 11, 1882, Bishop DeGoesbriand had deeded them the convent property.<sup>19</sup>

These early years were trying ones for the sisters, even through Father Boylan and the parishioners were good to them. Heating for the winter months was contained to the kitchen, dining room and the community room. The parlors had fireplaces, but other rooms, including the sleeping quarters, went unheated.

Until 1896, there was no corporation of the sisters in regard to the laws of the State of Vermont. In the convent records there is the following Articles of Association of the Sisters of St. Joseph Society:

We the subscribers, hereby associate ourselves as a corporation under the Laws of the State of Vermont to be known by the name of the Sisters of St. Joseph Society for the purpose of teaching schools and academies, building, supporting and managing hospitals, orphan asylums, Magdalen houses, and doing any other charitable work; and for the further purpose of purchasing or receiving by gift or otherwise, real and personal property, and holding, selling, or conveying the same at pleasure to carry out the purposes of the Society, at Rutland, in the County of Rutland in the State of Vermont upon the following conditions: that the corporation when organized shall adopt by-laws not repugnant to the laws of this state for the election of its officers and the conduct of the business affairs of said corporation.



## Chapter 5 Mt. St. Joseph Convent

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Dated at Rutland in the County of Rutland, this 18<sup>th</sup> day of February  
A.D. 1896

Subscribers	Post Office Address
John S. Michaud	Burlington, Vermont
Thomas J. Gaffney	Rutland, Vermont
Cecelia McDonough, Sister Philip	Rutland, Vermont
Mary Gately, Sister Aquinas	Brattleboro, Vermont
Ellen Cauley, Sister Mary Peter	Rutland, Vermont
Anna Leonard, Sister Miriam	Rutland, Vermont
Mary Vitta, Sister St. Charles	Rutland, Vermont
State of Vermont	

Office of the Secretary of State

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the record of the  
Articles of Association of the Sisters of St. Joseph Society as appears by  
the files and records of this state.

Witness my signature and the seal of this office, at Burlington this 20<sup>th</sup>  
day of February, One thousand Eight hundred and Ninety-six,

/s/ Chauncey W. Brownell

Secretary of State.<sup>20</sup>

Shortly thereafter the Sisters of St. Joseph Society began buying property on  
the west side of Meadow Street, until they owed all the meadowlands from Meadow  
Street to the East Creek to the Otter Creek. These lands became their garden. The  
land in back of what is now the Anna Mathew's Annex at the Loretto Home contained  
a barn for their cows and a chicken coop. Additional land was deeded to the sisters by  
the Reverend Thomas J. Gaffney, who had bought the parcels at various times.<sup>21</sup>

The chore of taking care of the cows [about 12] was at first the job of Patrick  
Flynn and a hired man. Later Mr. Barker had the job. It was their job to see that the  
cows were milked and fed and the milk delivered to the convent kitchen. The sisters  
also owned a horse and a "surrey with a fringe on top" which one of the men drove on  
the sister's errands.

The garden was planted and tended to by the sisters after their day in the  
classroom. For winter storage of the vegetables and fruits the sisters had constructed  
a vegetable or "root" cellar just east of the convent. The cellar was dug out and heavy  
beams supported the earth roof. It was situated about at the west end of the 1927  
classroom addition to the convent. With the construction of this new addition the  
vegetable cellar ceased to exist. These farm-like activities continued until some time  
in the 1930's.

Several of the sisters were proficient in teaching music, and many a Rutlander  
owes his or her musical ability to them. The sisters, who worked in the kitchen, also  
made altar breads. These were also sold to many of the neighboring parishes. Several  
of the nuns had an artistic bent for painting and fancywork. These articles were usu-  
ally sold for the benefit of the convent.

The sisters not only taught in the parochial schools of the city, but also con-  
ducted their own private grade school and high school. During Father Brown's pastor-  
ate these schools prospered. Although no figures for the separate enrollment of each of



these divisions were given, the 1914 parish report listed 100 in the convent school. In 1917, there were 132 in the convent school; in 1919 the enrollment reached 181; and in 1920, there were 217 students attending the convent school.

When the sisters celebrated the Golden Jubilee of their presence in Rutland, September 3, 1923, the matter of enlarging the present convent was proposed to the Alumnae. It was decided to have a drive for \$200,000.00 for this purpose.<sup>22</sup>

At 9:00 AM, on September 3, 1923, the most Reverend Joseph J. Rice, D.D., Bishop of Burlington, presided at a solemn High Mass at St. Peter's Church for the Sister's Jubilee. Since it was Labor Day a great crowd of people attended the Mass, as well as a large number of priests from the diocese. At noon the sisters served a dinner for the Bishop and the attending priests in their refectory. In the evening the alumnae of Mt. St. Joseph had a banquet from 5:00 to 8:00 PM.

With the idea of new construction in mind, money making projects were begun. The alumnae, as well as the sisters, pitched in to raise as much money as possible. The property just east of the old convent was purchased.

At a meeting of the Sisters' Corporation in 1926, Mother Columba, the Mother-General, was authorized to spend \$250,000.00 on the new addition and to borrow \$100,000.00. That year the construction of the new building was begun and in September of 1927, freshmen boys were accepted for the first time at the new Academy. In 1928, freshmen and the sophomore boys were accepted. The first class containing boys to graduate from the academy was in 1931. From that time until today, the Academy not only had alumnae but also alumni. On June 4, 1970, 150 boys and girls were graduated from the "Mount."

In addition to staffing St. Peter's Grammar School, Christ The King School and their own grade and high schools, the sisters had missions from the Rutland motherhouse which served schools in Brattleboro, Bennington, Bellows Falls, Whitehall, N.Y., Connellsville, Pa., and Fair Haven. They also maintained a convent in White River Junction, Vermont. The Whitehall, N.Y. and the Connellsville, Pa., missions did not last too many years because the sisters had stretched their numbers too thin to successfully accommodate these parishes.

Through the year 1946, one of the sisters was the Principal of the Academy. Beginning in 1947, the Reverend Edward J. Fitzsimons was appointed the first priest principal, while the sisters remained in control of the Academy's administration. Father Fitzsimons was succeeded by the Reverend John Lynch, and then the Reverend Wendell Searles who was followed by the Reverend John O'Connell.

Another addition to the Academy was completed in 1958, which expanded the community's property so that the north side of Convent Avenue from Meadow Street to Forest Street was a single connected complex. This last addition contained a large auditorium-gymnasium, as well as a cafeteria, classrooms and offices.

In 1954, the Sisters of St. Joseph Society relinquished the administration of Mt. St. Joseph Academy to the pastors and a lay school committee from the three parishes in Rutland. Hereafter, the sisters who taught there would receive a basic salary.

For the several years the support of the school was shared in this manner: 40% from St. Peters; 40% from Christ The King; and 20% from the Immaculate Heart of



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Mary Parish. The parents of the children who attended the Academy paid a small tuition. In later years the parents' yearly tuition has been raised, and each parish with children attending now pays a certain amount for each student from the parish attending the school.

In the late 1950's the Sisters of St. Joseph Society acquired the Clement property on Dorr Drive, on the west side of the city. Here they opened the College of St. Joseph the Provider. Sister Mary Matthew McDevitt was its first president. The purpose of the college was to prepare the postulants and novices of the Sisters of St. Joseph to teach in the elementary grades. Within a few years the college broadened its student body by accepting young women who wanted to teach in the elementary grades. In the late 1960's a dormitory and a classroom building were erected just east of the old buildings on the Novitiate grounds on the old Clement property.

<sup>1</sup> *By Railway or Rainbow*, p. 94

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 279 note #1

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 95

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 279 note #5

<sup>5</sup> *Rutland Globe*, September 8, 1873, and *Rutland Herald*, September 9, 1873

<sup>6</sup> *Rutland Herald*, January 22, 1875

<sup>7</sup> *Rutland Herald*, January 22, 1875

<sup>8</sup> *By Railway or Rainbow*, p. 270, Note #8 and p. 273, *The Large Family Becomes Crowded*, Note #1

<sup>9</sup> *Rutland Herald*, March 20, 1877

<sup>10</sup> *Rutland Herald*, December 25, 1877, and *By Railroad or Rainbow* p. 280, #7

<sup>11</sup> *Rutland Herald*, August 23, 1879

<sup>12</sup> *Rutland Land Records*, Book 37, p. 272

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, Book 35, pp. 518 and 519

<sup>14</sup> *Rutland Herald*, September 3, 1923

<sup>15</sup> Annual Parish Reports for these years

<sup>16</sup> *Rutland Herald*, September 3, 1923

<sup>17</sup> Sister Mary Cephas, S.S.J., *Educational Work of the Sisters of Saint Joseph's*, p. 31

<sup>18</sup> *Rutland Herald*, August 9, 1882

<sup>19</sup> *Rutland Land Records*, Book 44, p. 416 and Book 41, p. 653

<sup>20</sup> See also *Rutland Land Records*, Book 8, p. 29, 2/18/1896

<sup>21</sup> See also *Rutland Land Records*, Book 8, p. 29, 2/18/1896

<sup>22</sup> *Rutland Herald*, September 3, 1923



## St. Peter's Rectory and Cemetery

### The Rectory

In the early years, Father O'Callaghan and Father Daly stayed with one of the parishioners on their infrequent visits to minister to the Catholics in Rutland. After November 1854, when Father Druon was in town, and after October 1855 when Father Picart was in Rutland, they had to stay somewhere. The records give no clue. Until May 1856, there was no permanent residence for the priests.

The first rectory of the parish was purchased on the first of May 1856. A house and lot on Meadow Street were acquired from Albert Bean and his wife Eleanor, for \$875.00 by Father Druon. The witness to the transaction was [Reverend] Francis Picart, the assistant pastor.<sup>1</sup> The 1869 map of the village of Rutland shows that this property was on the south side of the church, the second house from the church. While the old St. Peter's church property was bounded on the south by the property of Richard B. Snow, the rectory property was bounded on the north by the Snow property. This rectory was evidently 21 Meadow Street.

This house continued to be used for the rectory until September 6, 1873. After completing the new church, Father Boylan had the school beside the church refitted for a rectory. The old church on Meadow Street became the school. The old rectory became the convent for the newly arrived Sisters of St. Joseph.

On January 21, 1875, the sisters' convent caught fire from a defective flue and serious damage was done to the roof and second floor. Father Boylan gave up his home to the sisters and after several days he took up residence in a small house on what is now convent property which the parish owned. Here he resided until the convent was built and he returned to the rectory.

Except for the veranda now on the front of the rectory, the exterior of the rectory looks much the same as it did in 1873 when Father Boylan moved into it. In 1896, Father Gaffney removed the steps in front of the front door and added to the front of the house a veranda. This veranda was replaced in 1915 when Father Brown added the present veranda.

Originally the rectory was lighted by gas, but after the turn of the century electricity was installed. During Father Brown's 39 years as pastor, the interior of the house was furnished austere. There were no drapes or curtains on the windows. A window shade, green in color and fastened at the bottom of the window, was so arranged that it could be pulled up as far as was desired. The floors were covered with linoleum.

Members of the household would suggest that he get different things for the house, but he would always put them off saying: "there are a lot of poor people in the parish whose homes are not too well furnished. If they came in here and saw this house better furnished than theirs, they might be embarrassed. Besides, I am not going to live forever. Some day someone else will be the pastor. Let him fix it up the way he wants it. It is good enough for me."

After Father Brown's death, Father Joyce renovated and redecorated the church, school and the rectory.





*The St. Peter's Rectory was originally built and used as a school. Upon the completion of the new St. Peter's Church, the school was moved to the old church. The school beside the new church then became the rectory. For a time it served as a convent for the Sisters of St. Joseph, with the pastor finding housing elsewhere. Upon the completion of the Mt. St. Joseph Convent, it again became the rectory.*



### The Cemetery

It was not until 1866 that St. Peter's Parish had a cemetery. Father Boylan bought three acres of land opposite Chaffee's Lumber Yard on January 16, 1866, for \$200.00.<sup>2</sup>

From that time on burials took place there. It is oral history that in those days the funeral procession walked from the wake-house to the church and thence to the cemetery, the pallbearers carrying the casket [a pine box] on their shoulders all the way. This was the custom in Ireland and it was brought here. Sometimes the walk would be from as far away as Green Street [now Killington Avenue]. Of course, the casket would not be nearly as heavy as those of today.

For thirty-five years this cemetery was in use. The burial records show that until 1884 there was an average of 20 to 25 burials a year. After 1884, the average almost doubled.

In 1887 Father Gaffney purchased the Calvary cemetery property from Frederick Chaffee on July 19, 1887, for \$10,000.00. The parish paid \$5,000.00 and Frederick Chaffee held a mortgage for the other \$5,000.00 which was eventually paid off.<sup>3</sup>

This cemetery on the south end of Meadow Street was only a five-minute walk from the church. But it did not begin to be used until 1891. Work had to be done to put the property in shape for use as a cemetery. In 1889 it was fenced and otherwise improved at the expense of \$971.00. In 1890 the cemetery was further improved at a cost of \$960.00.<sup>4</sup>

On May 22, 1891, the *Rutland Herald* stated: "the bodies in the cemetery of St. Peter's Church, opposite Chaffee's Lumberyard, will be gradually removed into the new cemetery as soon as it is ready. Several owners of lots in the old cemetery have already bought lots in the new one." The annual May procession held May 31, 1891, concluded with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament in the new cemetery.<sup>5</sup>

Father Gaffney arranged with Bishop DeGoesbriand to come to Rutland to consecrate the new cemetery. The societies and sodalities of the parish were asked to come in a body for the ceremonies. The choir and the school children practiced hymns to be sung.

The date set for the occasion was June 28, 1891. All met at the church and lined up. The choir and school children headed the procession followed by the members of the sodalities. The Young Men's Catholic Union with 56 members, and the St. Peter's Hibernian Society with 110 men came next. These were followed by members of the clergy [Fathers Gaffney, Caffey, and Proulx, of Rutland; O'Reilly of West Rutland and Brennan of New York]. Lastly came the acolytes and the Bishop. Shortly before 6:00 PM, the procession started for the cemetery. The choir and school children sang hymns appropriate to the occasion.

A large marble cross had been erected in the center of the cemetery. Around this cross the crowd gathered. The Bishop and the clergy stood at the foot of the cross and the rite of consecration began.<sup>6</sup>

The Bishop began with a prayer to God asking that: "He bless, sanctify and consecrate this cemetery so that the human bodies after having finished the course of life, while waiting the great day of judgement, may merit the joys of eternal life."



## Chapter 6 St. Peter's Rectory and Cemetery

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Then the Litany of the Saints was read, with everyone responding. After this the Bishop sprinkled the Cross with Holy Water. He then walked around the limits of the cemetery, sprinkling Holy Water everywhere, while the Psalm 50 [Miserere] was recited. Back at the Cross, the Bishop prayed that God would cleanse, bless, sanctify, and consecrate the cemetery so that all who trusted in Him, would obtain the remission of all their sins through His great mercy. He further prayed that those whose bodies were quietly waiting in this cemetery for the trumpet call of the archangel would receive His consolation.<sup>7</sup>

The Bishop then addressed the crowd telling them: "The cemetery was consecrated and therefore holy ground. The large cross in the center of the cemetery represented the tree of life. ...As Christ rose from the dead so will the righteous arise when the angel of god calls out the summons. Then will be the Judgement and the blessed will go to life everlasting. All those who die in the communion of the church, whether rich or poor, have a right to be buried in the cemetery. But no one who dies in an intoxicated state, or commits suicide, or is excommunicated can be laid at rest here."<sup>8</sup>

[Although this was the practice in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, in the 1930's the full force of the law was mitigated. Thus a person dying in an intoxicated state or committing suicide was given the benefit of the doubt, that at least a spark of sorrow may have been present before death actually took place. Therefore the state of the soul is left to the mercy of God. These earlier regulations were matters of church discipline, seeking to curb the evils of the day.]

After the ceremonies the societies formed in line, headed by the school children and sodalities, and marched to the church. At 7:30 PM Vespers were sung and the Bishop officiated at Solemn Benediction.<sup>9</sup>

The pastor is in charge of the cemetery. A caretaker has charge of the work of keeping it neat. Many of those who had members of their families buried in the old cemetery moved those bodies in the 1890's to the new Calvary Cemetery. This explains why quite a number of monuments there antedate the cemetery. Some people did not take advantage of this choice, and their monuments and graves are still in the old West Street Cemetery.

In 1914, Father Brown had the present vault erected. To aid in the care of the cemetery, Father Brown introduced the system known as "Perpetual Care" in 1911. To put a lot under perpetual care, the lot-holder entrusted the cemetery with a specified amount of money which the cemetery invested, with the annual interest going to the maintenance of the lot. Previous to this date, cemetery dues were charged for this purpose.

In 1911, the sum of \$557.00 in perpetual care funds was invested in the Clement Bank in Rutland. By 1922, these funds grew to \$6,350.15. In 1925, the funds mounted to \$13,075.75. In 1930, it was \$25,660.75; in 1939, \$40,010.75 and today about \$150,000.00 is in perpetual care funds. This brings in a tidy amount in interest to maintain the cemetery in a good condition.

In 1965, Father Connor began to collect a development fund to aid in beautifying the cemetery. At that time the two stone gates [obtained from the entrance to Mt. St. Joseph's Novitiate on Dorr Drive] were set in place beside the east road entrance to the cemetery.



The old St. Peter's Cemetery on West Street is still in existence. Quite a number of lots were emptied of graves shortly after the new cemetery opened in the 1890's. But some families elected to leave the remains of their loved ones interred there. Since the care of the lots was left to the lot holders [there was no perpetual care on this cemetery], the cemetery for many years was overgrown with grass and brush and grave stones had been tipped over and laid flat on the ground. The fence around the cemetery, installed by Father Gaffney, had become dilapidated and was torn down.

During Father Joyce's pastorate the cemetery was improved by leveling the ground and is now mowed several times during the summer season. Father Joyce tried to obtain permission from survivors of the original lot owners to move the remains of those buried there to the present Calvary Cemetery. But some refused to give this permission, and consequently this cemetery is still in existence.

<sup>1</sup> Rutland Land Records, Vol. 19, p. 643

<sup>2</sup> Rutland Land Records, Vol. 26, p. 734 and Annual Parish Report for 1866

<sup>3</sup> Rutland Land Records, Vol. 48, p. 118

<sup>4</sup> Annual Parish Reports for the Years 1889 and 1890

<sup>5</sup> *Rutland Herald*, June 1, 1891

<sup>6</sup> *Rutland Herald*, June 27 and 29, 1891

<sup>7</sup> *Rituale Romanum*, pp. 262-264

<sup>8</sup> *Rutland Herald*, June 29, 1891

<sup>9</sup> *Rutland Herald*, June 27, 1891



## Pastoral Care

## Reverend Jeremiah O'Callaghan

For almost a quarter of a century this zealous and holy priest traveled about the state of Vermont, when it was part of the diocese of Boston. He kept alive the faith by bringing Mass and the Sacraments to the scattered settlements, especially in the western part of this vast territory.<sup>1</sup>

Father O'Callaghan was born in County Kerry, Ireland about 1780. He was ordained for the diocese of Cloyne in 1805. While working there as assistant pastor, his extreme views on banking and usury got him into serious difficulties. He was opposed to the lending of money at interest. Hence, in 1819, he was discharged from his duties in that diocese.<sup>2</sup>

For eleven years he wandered about England, Europe, Canada and the United States, seeking a bishop who would be willing to employ him. He appealed his case to the Holy See in Rome on two occasions, but to no avail.<sup>3</sup>

In 1830, while Father O'Callaghan was in New York City, he met Bishop Fenwick of Boston. The zealous priest asked the good Bishop for employment in his diocese and on July 6, 1830, he was sent to the Vermont scene with instructions to visit Burlington, Vergennes, Pittsford and Wallingford.

Two events had prompted the Bishop's decision. First, earlier in the year he had discovered that about a thousand Catholics were in Burlington. It was the largest settlement of Catholics then to be found anywhere in New England, except at Boston and Charlestown. Secondly, before leaving for New York the Bishop had received a letter from Mr. James Sherlock of Wallingford begging for a priest for his area.<sup>4</sup>

When Bishop Fenwick met Father O'Callaghan and heard his story, he decided to employ him and to send him to the rural area of Vermont. In that place there would be little chance for him to foster his pet theories on usury, since there were few banks in Vermont and also since he would be kept busy travelling about the vast area.

After visiting the Catholics in the towns already mentioned, Father O'Callaghan's missionary zeal prompted him to include other Catholic settlements in the state. In these early years, he organized, and periodically visited, St. Albans, Swanton, Highgate, Fairfield, Underhill, Montpelier, St. Johnsbury, Burlington, Vergennes, Middlebury, Brandon, Pittsford, Rutland, Castleton, Tinmouth, Poultney, Wallingford, Dorset and Bennington. He built a church [St. Mary's] in Burlington in 1832. At Castleton he converted a carpenter shop into a chapel in 1836. Such was his zeal that his trips frequently carried him into northern New York and also into western Massachusetts.

In 1834, he re-published his book *Usury Funds and Banking* in Burlington, but because of the nature of its contents, it did not sell well.

For brief periods Father O'Callaghan had the assistance of several other priests. Chief among them was Father Auguste Petithomme who worked among the French-speaking Catholics of Burlington from May 1834 until October 1835; Fathers James Pitton and James Walsh from October 1833 to June 1834; and Fathers Patrick O'Beirne, Peter Connolly and John Brady.<sup>5</sup>



In 1837, when Father O'Callaghan was 57 years old, Father John B. Daly joined him. Father Daly took over the missionary work in the five southern counties of Vermont. This left Father O'Callaghan with the counties of Chittenden, Franklin, Orleans, Essex, Lamoille, Caledonia, Washington and Orange in the north. In 1847 Father George Hamilton, a priest of the diocese of St. Louis, Missouri, came to help Father O'Callaghan. On June 17, he took charge of the mission at St. Albans and some of the northern counties, leaving Father O'Callaghan with Chittenden, Washington and Orange Counties.<sup>6</sup>

In 1838, St. Mary's Church in Burlington burned under mysterious circumstances. For the next three years, Father O'Callaghan used the basement of the Old Courthouse for Mass. On October 3, 1841, the new St. Mary's was dedicated. It was built on the corner of St. Paul and Cherry Streets.

The *History of the Archdiocese of Boston* [Vol. II, p. 621] says that: "Father O'Callaghan erected a school on Cherry Street taught for several years by lay teachers. This building later was remodeled into a residence for the Bishop."

Father O'Callaghan was present at the installation of Bishop DeGoesbriand as the first Bishop of Burlington on November 6, 1853. On December 16 he asked and was given permission to leave the new diocese. He returned to the diocese of Boston. At this time he was 73 years of age.<sup>7</sup>

In 1854, Bishop Fitzpatrick sent him to labor among the Catholics of Northampton, Massachusetts, where he stayed until 1855. He then began to design, with P.C. Keely of Brooklyn, the future St. Jerome's church in Holyoke, Massachusetts. He lived in Holyoke in order to be near the scene of the new construction. In 1856, St. Jerome's of Holyoke was made the parish with Northampton as its mission. Begun in May 1856 and completed in 1857, the new St. Jerome's was dedicated on June 17, 1860.<sup>8</sup>

In 1858, Father O'Callaghan's health began to deteriorate, and on April 4, 1858 he was replaced as pastor. He continued to live in Holyoke until his death on February 23, 1861. He was buried in the churchyard at St. Jerome's and a monument there marks the place of burial.

Reverend John B. Daly, O.F.M.

To help Father O'Callaghan to minister to the Catholics living in Vermont, Bishop Fenwick found and sent the Reverend John B. Daly, O.F.M., newly received into the diocese of Boston. The year was 1837.

In consultation with Father O'Callaghan, it was decided that Father Daly would take charge of the Catholics in southern Vermont in the counties of Addison, Rutland, Bennington, Windsor and Windham. Middlebury became his headquarters.<sup>9</sup>

He began to visit the towns where Father O'Callaghan had found Catholics, and then began to search every nook and corner of his vast parish. He even wandered outside of Vermont when he heard that there were Catholics near its borders. He extended his missionary tours into North Adams and Pittsfield, Massachusetts and to Claremont in New Hampshire.<sup>10</sup>

In 1839-1840, he built a fair-sized church in Middlebury. Soon he had 27 missionary stations in three states. He added to those on his original list, the following:



Manchester, Bellows Falls, Plymouth, Norwich, Windsor and Woodstock in Vermont; Claremont, Cornish, Charlestown, Lebanon, Hanover and Keene, in New Hampshire; and North Adams and Pittsfield, in Massachusetts. In 1840, he estimated that there were about 1,331 Catholics in his missionary field.

In Castleton there were about 150 Catholics; in Middlebury about 500; in the towns of Brandon, Pittsford, Rutland, Wallingford and Shrewsbury there were about 400. Another 150 Catholics were to be found in Bennington; and about 400 between the towns of Woodstock, Windsor, Plymouth and Rockingham.<sup>11</sup>

In East Rutland at this time there were about 100 dwellings and 13 stores. Father Daly is believed to have visited each of his Catholic settlements four or five times a year.

"It is told of him that he never stayed in the same place more than one night. He was constantly on the move, travelling from place to place either on horseback or on foot, carrying with him the Sacred Vessels, vestments, and accessories for the celebration of Mass and the administration of the Sacraments. He often traveled 15 to 20 miles, sometimes at night, in order to be present in the morning for Mass."<sup>12</sup>

Such was his zeal that, as was practice of this time, he received no salary or stipends. He depended on the free will offerings made in church on Easter, Christmas and summer.<sup>13</sup> It was said that as a member of the Franciscan order, he sent to his superiors in that order whatever was left over from his own expenses.

In 1841, owing to the railroad construction gangs and industry springing up in New Hampshire, Bishop Fenwick asked Father Daly to visit Concord [probably in October], where he said Mass. Of Manchester, a New Hampshire textile town, Father Daly wrote in 1839, "it will soon have a Catholic Church." In 1844 he seems to have visited Lancaster, New Hampshire, and in 1845 Lakeport and Laconia.<sup>14</sup>

About 1847, Father Daly added Ludlow, Arlington, Northfield and Rockingham to his list of missionary stations. In 1852, Father Quevillan of Burlington built a church in Brandon.

On Saturday, November 5, 1853, when Bishop Louis DeGoesbriand was on his way to Burlington, from his consecration in New York City, he was met in Rutland by Father Daly, "the only priest in southern Vermont." Father Daly then traveled with the Bishop by train to Burlington where he assisted at the Bishop's installation the next day.<sup>15</sup>

One of the stories handed down by word of mouth from the early days tells of Father John B. Daly, O.F.M. going to Ludlow, evidently on a Saturday afternoon. When the train arrived in Rutland, he asked the conductor to hold the train for a few moments while he went to the drug store to get some medicine for a sick resident of Ludlow. The conductor informed him that the train had a schedule to follow and would leave on time, with or without him. The story goes that he went for the medicine and was gone some little time. The train had tried to leave on time, but for some reason, it could not move. As soon as Father Daly stepped aboard, it took off, a few minutes late.

Father Daly continued to minister to the Catholics of the south until October 3, 1854. He requested and was given permission to go to New York City to his religious order. For 17 years he had traveled the southern part of the state of Vermont.

In New York City he spent a year or two in parochial ministry and then became



chaplain of a female orphanage at Prince and Mott Streets. He died there on December 11, 1872.

### Reverend Zephyrin Druon

The Reverend Zephyrin Druon was one of many truly apostolic priests serving the diocese in its early years. In his first thirteen years in the Diocese of Burlington, he covered large areas from a central town. Zephyrin Druon was born on March 4, 1830, in Vendin Le Lieil, Pas de Calais, France. He prepared for the priesthood, first, at the Grand Seminary of Arras, France. Secondly, he came to this country with Bishop Amadeus Rappe, of Cleveland, Ohio, in August of 1850 and continued his studies in Cleveland. He finally finished his course in theology at the Seminary of St. Sulpice, Paris, France. He was ordained to the Holy Priesthood on July 2, 1853, at Beauvars, France, for the diocese of Cleveland.<sup>16</sup>

Shortly after his ordination, Father Druon returned to Cleveland where he served as a curate for four months, until December 1853. At this time he transferred to the Diocese of Burlington, arriving there on December 29, 1853.<sup>17</sup> No doubt he desired to serve under his friend the new Bishop of Burlington. [On July 22, 1856, Bishop DeGoesbriand received Father Druon's release from the Cleveland Diocese.]<sup>18</sup>

On January 6, 1854, Father Druon was sent to Bennington, with missions in Brattleboro and Bellows Falls.<sup>19</sup> Of course, there were no Catholic churches in these towns. On March 19, 1854, he bought a lot in Bennington and began the construction of a church.<sup>20</sup> The cornerstone of the first St. Francis of De Sales Church was blessed on August 3, 1854, and the church was completed that year.<sup>21</sup> On April 20, 1854, Father Druon bought a schoolhouse and used it as a church in Bellows Falls, Vermont.<sup>22</sup> In Brattleboro he bought a house and transformed it into a church. While living in Bennington he resided in the Jason Smith house, later the property of Sacred Heart Parish there.<sup>23</sup>

When Father Daly, O.F.M., retired from the diocese on October 3, 1854,<sup>24</sup> Father Druon was moved to Rutland shortly thereafter. From Rutland, Father Druon continued to care for Bennington, Brattleboro and Bellows Falls as well as the missions of Father Daly in West Rutland, Castleton, Fair Haven, Poultney, Pittsford, Brandon, Wallingford, Mt. Holly, Danby, East Dorset, Manchester, Arlington and North Bennington. During this pastorate he had the Reverend Francis Picart as an assistant.

In St. Peter's Parish he bought three pieces of property, one for the church, another for the rectory and the last for a school. He built a small brick church on lower Meadow Street in May 1855. The rectory was located two doors south of the church, and a house on West Street, near the entrance to Meadow Street, was used for the school. He also built a wooden frame church and schoolroom in West Rutland in 1855. In Pittsford he bought a lot for a church and a rectory.

On November 16, 1856, Father Druon was transferred from St. Peter's and appointed pastor of St. Augustine's Parish in Montpelier.<sup>25</sup> There he acquired land for a church and cemetery and built a brick church in 1859.<sup>26</sup> From Montpelier he had several missions in Northfield, Randolph, Woodstock and Waterbury. He offered the first Mass in Randolph on March 23, 1863. There he built another church.<sup>27</sup>





*Reverend Zephyrin Druon was the 1<sup>st</sup> pastor of St. Peter's Parish.*



On February 27, 1857, the Vermont Legislature appropriated \$40,000.00 to erect a new State House, on the condition that the inhabitants of Montpelier raise an equal amount. They raised \$100,000.00<sup>28</sup> In the Secretary of State's office in Montpelier there is a record showing that Father Druon contributed \$400.00 to this project.

In 1858, Bishop DeGoesbriand wrote in his diary on January 4: "Reverend Z. Druon, after building 10 churches within four years, is allowed to visit France, Rome and Jerusalem."<sup>29</sup> He returned to Montpelier on September 20, 1858. In his obituary it is stated that he built 14 churches in all.<sup>30</sup>

During the 1860's the Civil War was waged. The recruits for the Vermont Militia from the Montpelier area drilled in town. No doubt the Catholics among these men received visits and the priestly ministrations from Father Druon. Each year saw many young men leave the drill fields for the front. It was with a heavy heart that Father Druon bade them farewell.

On March 4, 1864, Father Druon was appointed Vicar General of the Diocese by Bishop DeGoesbriand.<sup>31</sup> [The Very Reverend Thomas J. Lynch, then stationed at St. Bridget's in West Rutland, was also a Vicar General].

On July 15, 1864, Father Druon was given a year's leave of absence.<sup>32</sup> The parishioners of St. Augustine's Parish were very sorry to see their friend and pastor leave their midst. At a public gathering before his departure for France, they presented him with a purse of \$205.00.<sup>33</sup>

*The Vermont Watchman and State Journal*, a weekly newspaper published in Montpelier, in its July 22, 1864, issue reported that Father Druon gained the esteem of all with whom he was associated, both in his clerical capacity and as a citizen. He carried with him the best wishes of the community.

On July 21, 1864, the *Montpelier Argus* noted that "Father Druon leaves the country full of foreboding for the future, heart-sick of the insane fanaticism now in power, and determined never to return until conservative counsels are again in the ascendancy, the horrid fratricidal strife now going on is ended, and peace once more restored."

His pastorate at St. Augustine's was terminated with the beginning of his leave of absence. On his return from France, in July 1865, he was appointed Pastor of the Immaculate Conception Parish [St. Mary's] in St. Albans, Vermont.<sup>34</sup>

The St. Albans Parish was composed of English-speaking people as well as French Canadians. The church there was not large enough to hold them all. "Due to the increase of French Canadians, Father Druon, soon after his arrival, found it necessary to celebrate one Mass on Sundays for the French-speaking people by themselves, and another for the English-speaking portion of the congregation by themselves, in the same church, in order for them all to be seated."<sup>35</sup> The parish was divided when the French Canadian parish [Holy Guardian Angels] was established in 1877.<sup>36</sup> Father Druon donated \$1,000.00 toward the building of this new parish church.<sup>37</sup>

In May 1869, the Very Reverend Zephyrin Druon founded and edited a French language newspaper *Le Protecteur Canadien*. However, in 1871, fire destroyed the printing plant and this zealous priest then sold the newspaper.<sup>38</sup>

Abby M. Hemenway states that: "He [Father Druon] was the most scholarly,



piquant, and solid preacher and writer of the Catholic Clergy of Vermont.”<sup>39</sup> History attests that his zeal for souls was a great passion in his life, but tradition tells us that, after souls, came his books.<sup>40</sup>

He died at St. Mary’s in St. Albans on January 27, 1891, after a pastorate of more than 25 years, in his 38<sup>th</sup> year as a priest. After the funeral Mass he was buried in front of St. Mary’s Church in a sarcophagus especially prepared to receive his body.<sup>41</sup>

#### Reverend Francis Picart

This priest was born in Finisterre, France. While still a seminarian, he heard Bishop DeGoesbriand speak on the need for priests in Vermont, and he volunteered to join the new diocese. After his ordination in 1855, he came to Burlington in time to be present at the first diocesan synod held on October 4 and 5, 1855.

For a short while he ministered to the needs of Catholics in Underhill, Middlebury and Bennington. After having been an assistant under Father Druon at St. Peter’s for some time, he was appointed pastor of St. Peter’s on November 16, 1856. Early in January he suggested that Bishop DeGoesbriand make St. Bridget’s of West Rutland a separate parish because three-fifths of the Catholics in the Rutland area were living there. On January 27, 1857, he was named the first resident pastor at West Rutland. He also had charge of Castleton, Fair Haven, Poultney and Proctor as missions. In his first census at St. Bridget’s he recorded 1,294 souls.

He was very active in his years there and accomplished much for the good of the parish. On November 3, 1859, he was transferred to Holy Rosary Parish, Richmond, Vermont. In 1860 the Bishop named him pastor of St. Mary’s Parish, Middlebury, Vermont, where he remained until 1866. That year he received permission to transfer to the Diocese of Portland, Maine. He died in Maine on June 22, 1870.

#### Reverend Charles J. Boylan

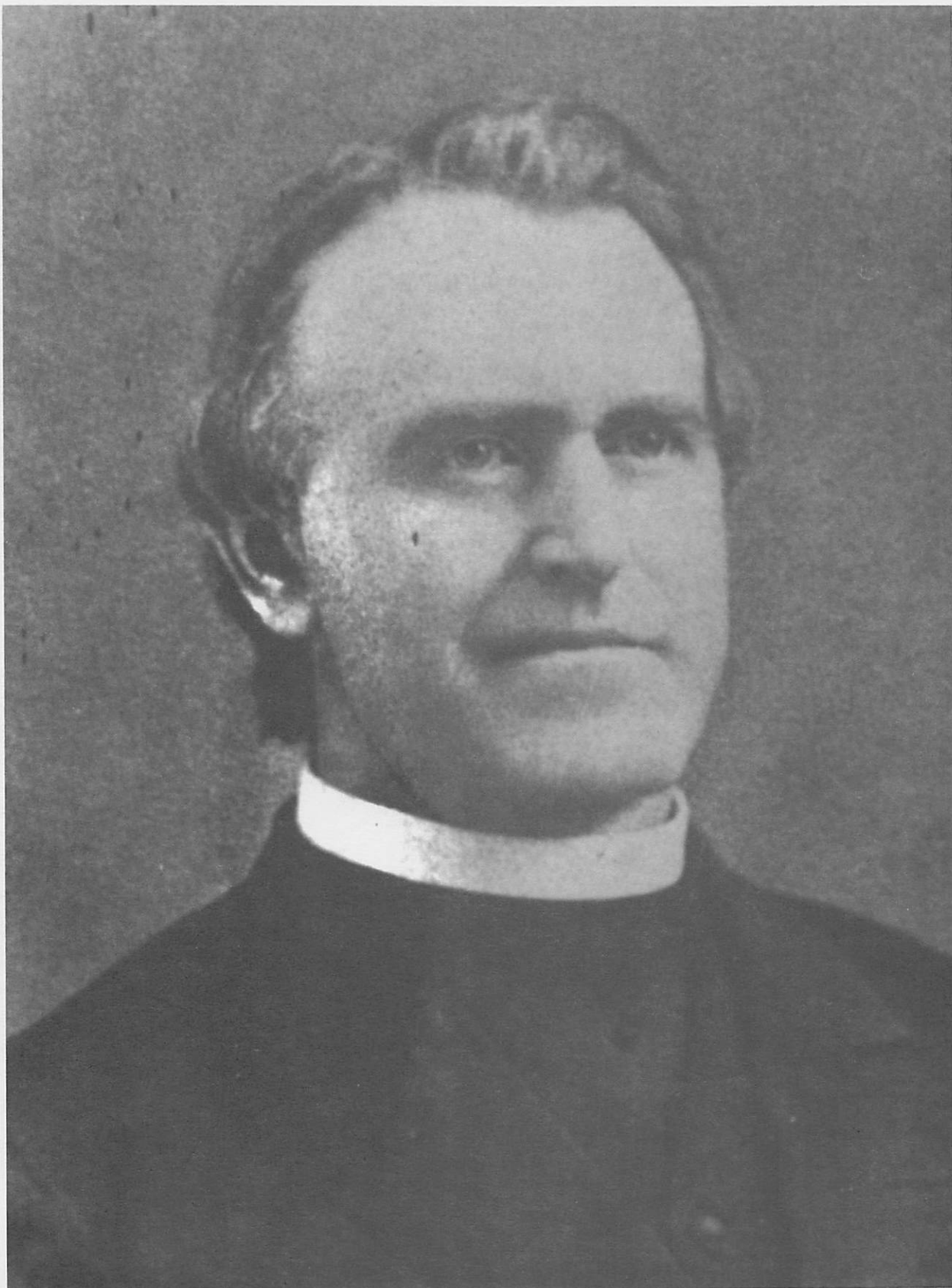
The Reverend Charles J. Boylan was from the “old sod.” He was born in Kilnelneck, County Cavan, Ireland.

After his early education in the local schools, and having a desire for the priestly life, he went to the seminary in Ireland. But he was not to be a priest in Ireland. While he was still in the seminary, he crossed the Atlantic and on November 24, 1853, he was accepted for the Burlington Diocese. He completed his theological studies at the Grand Seminary in Montreal and was ordained on December 20, 1856, by Bishop DeGoesbriand at the Cathedral in Burlington, Vermont.

On January 24, 1857, he was named pastor of St. Peter’s Parish, Rutland, which was then “a small and struggling parish.” His parishioners then were “counted in the hundreds.” At that time St. Peter’s was the headquarters for all the missions in half of Rutland County and all of Bennington County. By train, young Father Boylan faithfully visited each of the communities in the vast parish, bringing to the Catholic people the consolations of their religion. He labored alone until the arrival of Father John Curtis O’Dwyer in 1865.

Not content with just taking care of the spiritual welfare of the Catholics in this area, he began to build churches in various towns. In 1859-1860, a new brick church in Pittsford, called St. Alphonsus, was erected under Father Boylan’s direction.<sup>42</sup> In





*Reverend Charles Boylan was the 3<sup>rd</sup> pastor of St. Peter's Parish.*



1858, Father Duglue of Middlebury had begun a church in Orwell. Before the church was finished he was transferred to Burlington and Father Boylan finished the building of that church.<sup>43</sup> In 1865-1866 the beautiful St. Patrick's Church in Wallingford was constructed.<sup>44</sup> The last church, outside of Rutland, that was built by Father Boylan was in Mt. Holly, Vermont, in 1875. He had been saying Mass there on weekdays.<sup>45</sup>

One by one, the missions of St. Peter's were given to other pastors as more priests were settled in the area. After 1868, there was only one mission attached to St. Peter's Parish, that of Mt. Holly.

By 1864, old St. Peter's church on Meadow Street had become too small for the growing number of Catholics. It was necessary to start making plans to construct a new and larger church. First, Father Boylan prevailed upon the Catholic ladies of the parish to hold an annual bazaar to raise more money for the parish treasury. By this means alone, for several years thereafter, between \$2,000.00 and \$3,000.00 was raised annually.

Next Father Boylan bought property on the southeast corner of Washington and Wales Streets. When the "Ledge" lot in "Nebraska" on the southeast corner of Mechanic and Meadow Streets became available, this property was acquired from Mr. Evelyn Pierpoint in February 1867.

The old parochial school at 273 West Street had also become too small for the increased number of children in the parish and so that year, Father Boylan constructed a new parochial school on the southwest corner of the "Ledge" lot.

In 1868, the new church was begun. Father Boylan worked along with the men of the parish to build this church. "He is deserving of much credit, not only for his persistent endeavors to erect such an edifice but for the minuteness with which he has carried out the plans of the architect [P.C. Keely of Brooklyn, New York]," declared the *Rutland Herald* on October 28, 1870. On March 29, 1873 the *Rutland Herald* noted that: "The stone for the church was quarried on the grounds." The *Herald* also noted that "The building and superintending of the whole work [the church] has been done by Father Boylan, the indomitable pastor, whose energy and capacity have enabled him to surmount all the numerous obstacles with which he was necessarily surrounded." In his eulogy at Father Boylan's funeral, the Very Reverend Thomas J. Lynch, V.G. said of him: "There is not a stone laid here without his personal supervision. He had to undergo criticism, even the criticism of friends, and yet without intermission he labored to erect these buildings for the honor of God."

On June 29, 1873, Father Boylan had the happiness of seeing the beautiful St. Peter's Church blessed and dedicated to the service of God. Not only his parishioners, but also the good Father, could justifiably be proud of this accomplishment.

As soon as the church was finished, Father Boylan converted the schoolhouse beside the church into the rectory. He then turned the old church on Meadow Street into a school and the Meadow Street rectory into a convent for the Sisters of St. Joseph whom he had obtained from Flushing, New York, to teach in his schools.

In the annual report for 1874, there is a note which gives us a new facet of Father Boylan's life: "In furnishing this report I may state that I never retain a dollar for personal use as long as I see it required in any other way. Hence marriage, baptismal, and [Mass] intention money is applied without any reserve through my anxiety



to cancel the entire debt which as you perceive is comparatively very small considering the amount of property and work done."

This "never retaining for personal use" of any money must have been a life-long practice of the good Father Boylan. The *History of the Catholic Church of New England*, [Vol. II, page 548] notes that: "When he died it was discovered that he did not even leave money enough to bury him." He thought of himself last.

In August 1875, the Rutland convent of the Sisters of St. Joseph became the motherhouse for the nuns of this order in Vermont. [The order had become a diocesan one, at the request of Bishop DeGoesbriand.]

In the report for 1876, Father Boylan states that he had begun to "collect material for the proposed new convent." Having purchased the property on the northeast side of Mechanic and Meadow Streets in 1874, he began the construction of the new convent in 1878 and completed it in 1882.

In 1883, he constructed a new St. Peter's School on the northeast side of Meadow and River Streets. In 1886, St. Mary's School on Green Street [now Killington Avenue] was built.

Father Boylan's life was not only that of a builder; he watched over the spiritual life of his parishioners. In his eulogy, Father Lynch said: "How faithfully he administered the sacraments...often when returning wearied from the confessional he was summoned to attend the bedside of the dying and he never refused to go. He preached the Word of God, he instructed the children day by day, and he offered up the Holy Sacrifice." A parishioner would write: "His counsel with his parishioners had at times a wholesome effect upon their rule of conduct in their everyday life."

His rugged constitution began to feel the toll that all this work exerted upon it. In July 1881, Father Boylan became seriously ill.<sup>46</sup> He was confined to bed for several weeks and in September began to get around the rectory. On October 1, 1881, the *Herald* reported that he was well enough to be out. On October 9, he was able again to offer Sunday Mass.

On August 21, 1886, while celebrating Mass he was taken ill again and was paralyzed on his left side. From this he again recovered. Although aware of his danger and often in suffering, he kept up his active work in the church.

In the evening of December 2, 1886, he suffered a fatal stroke in the form of apoplexy. Earlier that evening, at 7:30, he had gone to the convent to give Benediction and then returned home. A few moments after he retired at 9:30 he summoned Father Glynn, his assistant, by rapping on the wall. When Father Glynn got to the room, he found Father Boylan conscious but speechless, standing in the middle of the floor. After being helped to bed, Dr. Keenan and Dr. Hanrahan were summoned. Father Glynn gave Father Boylan the last sacraments. Both the doctors, after examining him, gave him only a few hours to live. At 6:45 Saturday evening, December 4, 1886, the good priest's soul went to his Maker and the church bell was tolled almost immediately to convey the sad news to the parishioners.

The funeral was held on Tuesday, December 7, at 9:30 AM. Bishop DeGoesbriand was unable to attend because of illness. The Very Reverend Thomas J. Lynch, V.G., of Burlington represented the Bishop and delivered the eulogy.

The occasion was generally observed in the village. Several mills and factories



closed for the day. Many stores were closed during the hours of the funeral. The village schools were closed. Extra horse street cars, left West Rutland at 8:00 AM to bring visitors to the funeral. At least 2,500 people crowded into the church, and the side aisles, gallery and vestibule were packed.

Thirty priests filled the sanctuary, among them, "there were few who did not claim the deceased as director or friend." The officers of the Mass were: the Reverend Thomas J. Gaffney of East Dorset, celebrant; the Reverend T. Z. Conaty of Worcester, Massachusetts, deacon; and the Reverend E. Reynolds of Bellows Falls as sub-deacon. The Reverend J. C. McLaughlin of Brandon was Master of Ceremonies. The combined choirs of Sacred Heart of Mary and St. Peter's sang the funeral Mass.

The bearers were: Messrs. J. F. Hogan, P. J. Clifford, Capt. W. Cronan, T. W. Moloney, E. D. Reardon, J. B. Dyer, E. J. Burke, M. R. Welch, Frank Conniff, Hugh Duffy, William Brohan and J.J. Barrett, all parishioners of St. Peter's.

After the Mass a procession formed and marched to and around the convent as the priests slowly chanted. The priests followed immediately after the casket. They were followed by the relatives of the dead priest, twenty sisters of St. Joseph, one hundred and twenty of the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the selectmen and village trustees, thirty members of St. Joseph's Benevolent Society, led by E. A. Burns, president, the St. Peter's Hibernian Society, J. B. Dyer, president, with ninety members, and the congregation.

After circling the convent, the procession brought the remains to a grave just northwest of the church tower for final burial. A large marble slab was placed over the vault and cemented on after the ceremonies.

Besides the spiritual and temporal affairs of the parish, Father Boylan found time for other interests. For a number of years he was a member of Bishop DeGoesbriand's board of advisors. When the Rutland Horse Street Car Company began operations in 1884, he tried to persuade them to extend the line down toward the church.<sup>47</sup> Eventually the "South Belt" came into being. It was a decided help in getting to Sunday Mass for those who lived outside of the neighborhood.

At a meeting of the executive committee of the Rutland Free Library, held on Monday, December 6, fitting mention was made of the death of the Reverend Father Charles J. Boylan. Heartfelt regret was expressed for the great loss sustained, not only by his own people for whom he had labored so long and so faithfully, but by the whole community.

The Library Association is indebted to him for zealous and effective assistance as a member of its first book committee, as well as for a cordial and intelligent sympathy that won all hearts. It would be false to its own instincts if it failed in this public manner to acknowledge that debt, and its own sense of loss.

/s/ Julia C.R. Dorr

December 7, 1896 President of Rutland Free Library Association

Outside of persons in his own denomination there is probably no one who knew Father Boylan better than Dr. Charles Woodhouse, M.D. Dr. Woodhouse was president of the Rutland Village. In a business and social way Dr. Woodhouse came in frequent contact with the pastor and had an opportunity to observe the traits of char-



acter that made him so prominent. Dr. Woodhouse wrote:

I have known Father Boylan for eighteen or twenty years, and the longer I have known him the more I have learned to esteem him as a man of the people and the people's man. And in all my acquaintance with the world at large, including of course men and things, sometimes in quite minute detail, I cannot think of any one who has done so much of valuable local homework and good work as he has done here and about Rutland. He was doubtless a good and faithful priest, instant in season and out of season, among his own parishioners. His ecclesiastical superiors, coadjutors and parishioners know this best. My remarks about him will relate more particularly to the man as a man, as a citizen and public man of large influence and prominence in this community. And in this relation the general public knew him, of necessity, most and best.

However faithful one may be in a special calling, in this or that office, it is always a blessed thing to have a good, strong, faithful man, and of broad and generous impulses back of the office. Father Boylan, as far as I know, never forgot to take the man along with him, and in his various relations to society at large, his manly character, his business capacity, his foresight of the future, conspicuously marked his judgment and verified the wisdom of his conduct. With small means and under adverse influences he wrought almost magical wonders, for he was willing to wait as well as ready to work. He looked after matters of business concern in the minutest detail and, as a businessman, was therefore a marked success. It has been said by some who knew well of his wishes, that in the last part of his busy, tireless life, he had in contemplation, ... the erection of a home for the aged and helpless of his parishioners. If so, this would only be just like him. And it is to be hoped that such an institution may yet be established in remembrance of his pious and benevolent pastorship in Rutland, and that with the name of "The Boylan Home," it may long endure as an honor to his memory and a blessing to humanity. We may be sure that not a few outside of his denominational limits would be glad in a substantial way thus to honor the man who wished so well and worked so much for the good of his race. Father Boylan, in his influence in behalf of temperance, industry, thrift and public order, was a well-known and beneficent power in this community. He was always for good manners and good morals, and no infraction of them received his countenance but always the rebuke of both his precepts and example. He was public spirited, willing to help in any good cause, servile to no oppressive monopoly, and disposed to aid the public outside of mere sectarian lines, as his assistance in money and personal labor in the late free library movement, as well as other important matters, amply testifies. Indeed, Rutland has great cause to be thankful that a man so wise, thoughtful, liberal and competent has, in the important office of St. Peter's parish priest, lived so long and labored so efficiently for [parish interests] as did Father Charles J. Boylan. There is not a foot



of ground in Rutland today that has not been enhanced in permanent value because of his having lived and been one among us. And many a family is blessed with happier and more comfortable homes, and more elevating surroundings, because of his life work in our midst.

He was a hard worker and at his post of duty at all times. And, doubtless, his days were fewer on this creditable account. But they were enough to show what a devoted and intelligent man can do in the place of a parish priest, who never forgot he was a man to make the world better, to wisely counsel the young, to promote the interests of order and sobriety and leave a benign influence upon thousands of mankind. This influence will long be felt. It is not the transient thing of an hour, and though dead, the name and fame of Father Boylan will long and deservedly live in the grateful memory, not of his parish alone, but of our whole people, regardless of sect or party, so true is it that real worth receives the free and unconstrained homage of every thoughtful and noble heart.

And now that his life of anxious toil and useful labor is over, we can all sincerely say: "May he rest in peace."

#### Reverend Thomas J. Gaffney

Father Gaffney was born in Edgeworthstown, County Lanford, Ireland, on April 9, 1843. He was educated there in its common schools. For his classical course he studied at Mount Melleroy Seminary, located in County Waterford in the south of Ireland. Next he studied at Maynooth College in Dublin and at All Hallows Seminary to prepare for the priesthood. He finished his seminary course at the age of 21, graduating with honors [the canonical age for ordination then was 23].<sup>48</sup> In that same year, 1864, he came to Burlington and Bishop DeGoesbriand sent him to the Grand Seminary in Montreal to await the time when he would be old enough for ordination.<sup>49</sup> On August 16, 1865, he was ordained a Deacon.<sup>50</sup> And on April 9, 1866 the order of priest was conferred upon him at the Cathedral in Burlington.

He was immediately assigned as an assistant at St. Peter's Parish and after two years there, in 1868, he was appointed the first pastor of St. Jerome's Parish in East Dorset, Vermont, with missions in Wallingford, Danby and Arlington. For nineteen years he covered this vast parish. Its limits were Shaftsbury on the south; the county line on the east; Rutland on the north; and Pawlet and the Vermont State line on the west. On three Sundays a month he had an 8:00AM Mass in East Dorset and a 10:30 AM Mass in Wallingford and on the other Sunday of the month an early Mass in Arlington and a later Mass at Danby. This parish had a total of 1,200 souls.<sup>51</sup>

During these years Father Gaffney was very active within the confines of his parish. Catechism classes, with the cooperation of laymen and laywomen, were held regularly for the children.

Shortly after his arrival in East Dorset he purchased a house for a parochial residence, and a very eligible site for a new church and eight acres of land. This took place on September 21, 1868. [The first church was a frame building bought by Father Druon and converted into a church.] In 1874, Father Gaffney built the new St. Jerome's Church which was a frame building. It was dedicated by the Bishop on August 25,





*Reverend Thomas Gaffney was the 4<sup>th</sup> pastor of St. Peter's Parish.*



1874. Father Gaffney began a cemetery on the north side of the new church.

During these years there were about 850 Catholics, nearly all Irish with a sprinkling of French, in East Dorset. [In 1970, there were only a handful of Catholics left in this parish.]

In the 1860's to the early 1880's, the marble quarries and mills were the principal employers of these people. In the late 1880's, these marble works closed and the people moved elsewhere.

Danby also got a church. The building, formerly a bank, was bought by Father Gaffney on July 11, 1871 and remodeled into a church. It was dedicated on May 23, 1872. There were about 30 Catholic families in Danby.<sup>52</sup>

In Wallingford Father Gaffney bought land for a Catholic cemetery on August 2, 1873. In this parish there were 150 families.

In Arlington there were about 70 Catholic families. In August 1875, Father Gaffney began to erect a frame building for a new church. Although incomplete, it was first used on November 21, 1875 and dedicated in August 1878. The cemetery property was bought in 1874 and consecrated by Bishop DeGoesbriand.

The benefits of regular Sunday Mass, the administration of the Sacraments, and the interest and love of Father Gaffney brought out the best in these Catholics. The "old folks" in Arlington, for example, loved to talk of Father Gaffney's days among them. Every July a field day, or lawn party, was held in a grove in town. The women would prepare a dinner that was served at noon while the remainder of the day was spent watching the "young fry," and those not so young, compete in games and races for a small prize. One of the activities was to try to kick a football the farthest. Some of the men remembered that Father Gaffney used to kick it farther than anyone else. He was a great believer in the "manly art of self-defense," and taught a few of the young lads how to box. It was said that he was a skillful horseman. He always had "fast horses" and used to race even at the local fairs. To him horse racing was "the sport of kings."

At the Manchester Fair horse races, Father Gaffney entered the horse race with his fast horse. Warming up before the race, Father Gaffney's horse seemed to the crowd to have gotten away from him. But he was too good a horseman to have let this happen. One of the fans in the stands, thinking that the horse was out of control and Father Gaffney could not control it, was heard to say, "Glory be to God, Father Daly could stop the train, but Father Gaffney cannot stop the horse."

While still in East Dorset he occasionally drove to Rutland to visit Father Boylan. As he came down Convent Avenue, he let the horse gather speed and would turn sharply into the rectory driveway and come to a stop before the house in a cloud of dust. Father Boylan would be agitated by what he thought was Father Gaffney's recklessness.

He used to drive his horse and buggy [or, in the winter, sleigh] between his missions. He never spared himself in his devotion to his people. It was no wonder that this large and burly man [although of medium height] probably contracted at this time "bronchial" troubles which affected him in later life, as the *Herald* stated in his obituary on September 12, 1906.

In January 1887, following the death of his friend, Father Boylan, he was ap-



pointed to fill the vacancy at St. Peter's Church in Rutland. It was a reluctant Father Gaffney who became the next pastor.

On Sunday, January 9, 1887, his first sermon, or perhaps a better word would be apology, was as follows:

I appear before you today for the first time as pastor of your souls and, I admit candidly, as a most unworthy successor to a great and holy priest; but I am not to blame for this; neither are you. I have not intruded myself upon you; I could not do it. You have not called me, you know better. I have been chosen and sent by our Right Reverend Bishop, who is a ruler in the church and who alone has the power of appointment in the Catholic Diocese of Burlington. On him therefore rests the responsibility of my presence here today in the capacity of pastor. I will say also that I did not seek the appointment, and you will not be offended when I say that I did not deserve it, or like it when received; for you must feel in your hearts that it must always be as bitter a sorrow for a priest to part with a people he loves as dearly as I have loved mine, as for you to lose a pastor who has labored so long and successfully in your midst. I dread moreover the burden of so large and important a parish, especially as the successor of such a priest as Father Boylan, who, besides his many greater virtues, had the advantage of growing up with the parish and of knowing you all so intimately. I come among you with a heavy heart and many misgivings that my weak, unaccustomed shoulders can never sustain the burden that my lamented predecessor, spiritual athlete that he was, bore so long a time with such credit to himself, benefit to you, and glory to God. Yet, since the change has been made, I rejoice that I do not come amongst entire strangers. Rutland was the scene of my first work in the ministry. ...Then I was a mere boy, with little experience and small appreciation of a pastor's duties and responsibilities. Since, as my appearance indicates, I have had a hard time of it; but my hardships were chiefly of a physical nature, and the great goodness of my people more than compensated for it. There is some work in me yet and, such as it is, I hope to devote it to the advancement of your temporal as well as spiritual welfare. Of course, I never expect to approach Father Boylan in any of those truly apostolic qualities that distinguished his long and faithful pastorate. ...You will never see his like in Rutland again. But, the model of that saintly priest can never fade from my recollections and to copy it, as closely as my knowledge and human frailty will permit, shall be my constant study and effort of my life. I have no confidence in myself, but I trust in the power and mercy of God and your constant, fervent prayers for strength to do so; that, when the end shall come, we may all hear, both you and I, my beloved brethren, that consoling sentence already spoken by Our Divine Father to our dear Father Boylan, "Well done good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of the Lord"<sup>53</sup>

Father Gaffney concluded his remarks by suggesting the propriety of erecting a monument over the grave of Father Boylan, and the purchase of a memorial pipe



organ. He felt that between \$2,000.00 and \$3,000.00 would be needed. A special collection for this would be taken up the next Sunday. Donations large and small would be gratefully received.

With these sobering thoughts began a pastorate that would last for almost twenty years, a pastorate that was "such a credit to himself, a benefit to the parishioners, and gave glory to God," as Father Gaffney said of the late Father Boylan.

The parishioners were pleased to hear him state his reliance on Almighty God and his need for their prayers. They were enthusiastic over the idea of a fitting monument to the memory of Father Boylan and the memorial pipe organ. Such was the enthusiasm engendered by these memorials that by April 20 the fund had grown to \$3,000.00 and was still increasing.<sup>54</sup>

The organ was installed and dedicated at a Requiem High Mass for Father Boylan on July 4. The church was filled for the occasion. The memorial statue of Father Boylan took a little more time to erect. But that was completed in the spring of 1889.

Because of the parish debt, owing to all the building in previous years, Father Gaffney was loath to spend parish money except where absolutely necessary. The first Easter collection for Father Gaffney amounted to \$700.00. Of this \$400.00 was used for repairs that had to be made and the remainder of the collection was spent for a suitable fence around the old Catholic cemetery on West Street.

In the parish report for 1886, there was an addenda to the usual items: "I have donated my Christmas collection and half of my salary to balance the accounts this year and I feel contented that it was no worse, considering the great expenses of this parish. I hope to bring up the revenue and I know the expenses will not be so large. / s/ Rev. T. J. Gaffney"

This liberality of Father Gaffney continued for several years as witness the 1889 report: "To balance accounts I donate the Christmas collection and other money of my own." In 1891, we read: "To T. J. Gaffney, should he ever ask for it, it does not draw interest and will go to the church at my death, the sum of \$2,000.00." In the 1898 report it was noted that "During the past year I have built an addition to St. Peter's School and paid for it all without any charge against the congregation; on the condition that half of the cost (\$3,750.00), without interest, will be paid to me should I ever need it. With my death this debt will be cancelled."

The total indebtedness of the parish in 1887 amounted to \$16,426.00. This sum was whittled down during Father Gaffney's administration until in 1905, he wrote in the annual parish report in large letters: "Free of debt, all monies owed to me are cancelled."

Two items caused a temporary rise in the debt. One was the purchase of the present Calvary cemetery in 1887 for which he paid \$10,000.00, \$5,000.00 in cash and a mortgage held by Mr. Frederick Chaffee for the other \$5,000.00. The second was in 1894, when the interior of the church was repainted.

During these years Father Gaffney encouraged the social life of the parish through the existing societies. One society which enjoyed the support and enthusiasm of the young men in the 1890's was the society called the "Young Men's Catholic Union."

One of his parishioners said of him: "He was always doing for others, never for



himself. Only a few years ago he donated all of his savings to the foundation of a most worthy charitable institution [the Loretto Home] retaining nothing whatever in the way of property or money. This action was characteristic of the man."

Another could say: "How he loved little children. Even in his last illness he loved them, cared for them, watched over them. On the last Sunday of his life in his intense suffering his heart went out to them and he asked to have the blinds opened that he might look on them once more [the children were walking from the school to the church to attend the 9:00 AM Mass.]

Although athletic in his youth, for some time before his death, poor health made violent exercise out of the question and necessitated frequent trips to the South.<sup>55</sup>

He made extended trips to Europe and the Holy Land. One journey to the Holy Land gave him a national reputation. During the trip he visited the Vatican at Rome and led a party of 12 priests and 150 laymen in an audience before Pope Pius X, making the presentation in Latin. On his return the parishioners gave him a purse of \$800.00.

He was always a great student. He had a large library. It was said of him that he was "a man of great intellectual attainments. He was a man as large of mind as he was of body and his labors were fruitful."

He was vitally interested in the erection of the first Rutland Hospital. In October 1891, he appealed to the parishioners "for funds for the new hospital." On December 30, 1891, an entertainment was held for the same purpose.<sup>56</sup>

When he came to St. Peter's Parish there were 2,000 members in the parish. This increased to 3,500 before his death. The church debt was liquidated, the school was enlarged, and a new cemetery had been procured. He insisted on the strict observance of the tenets of the Catholic Church by his parishioners. His crusades against drinking, dancing and card playing made him the object of much comment. [These must have been the home, or "kitchen," dances at which there was considerable drinking. The YMCA also held dances from time to time]<sup>57</sup>

He was termed: "One of Rutland's, noblest, its best citizen. ... He is one in ten thousand. ... He would have been distinguished in any walk of life. ... He was a large-hearted man. ... He was the soul of hospitality for his fellow priests"<sup>58</sup>

*The Parish Monthly* was a parish bulletin that began publication in 1905. Volume 1, No. 11, October 1906, published an account of the death and funeral of Father Gaffney.

This active life, in spite of infirmities, had to end. On Sunday, September 2, 1906, he came down with pneumonia. With the help of oxygen his condition improved. On Monday, September 10, his heart began to grow weaker and on September 12, at 10:30 AM, the end came to this valiant priest. He was mourned by all.

Late Wednesday the body of Father Gaffney was laid out in the rectory. Thursday morning Father Norbert Proulx of Sacred Heart of Mary [now Immaculate Heart of Mary] church celebrated a Requiem High Mass attended by the children of the parochial schools. Thursday the body of the late pastor was placed on an elevated bier before the main altar.

On Friday, September 14, 1906, the solemn funeral Mass took place. The Right Reverend John S. Michaud, D.D., Bishop of the diocese presided at the throne. The



Reverend Edward Reynolds of Bellows Falls was the celebrant; The Reverend Daniel J. O'Sullivan of St. Albans, was the Deacon; the Reverend John Galligan of Burlington, was Subdeacon; and the Reverend P. J. Doheny was the Master of Ceremonies. Reverend P. J. Barrett of Burlington preached the eulogy. The choir was assisted by Mrs. D. A. Cocklin and Mrs. T. W. Moloney. The choirmaster was William McKeaugh, and the organist was Miss B. M. Clifford. The church was filled to capacity.

Following the Mass a procession formed outside the church to go to the cemetery. The procession was led by the cross-bearer and two acolytes, the school children, the children of Mary, the Sisters of St. Joseph, the clergy, hearse, pall-bearers, the Knights of Columbus, the Catholic Order of Foresters, followed by the general public. There were more than 1,700 people making the sorrowful trek to Calvary, where the final prayers were said before the large Celtic cross which marks the spot of his grave.

The *Rutland Evening News* editorialized him thus: "He devoted his splendid talents to the moral and spiritual betterment of his fellowmen. Many are the men who can say that as the direct fruits of Father Gaffney's example and influence, their lives have been brightened, their hopes raised, their standard of conduct elevated, their very souls saved."<sup>59</sup>

In cold weather, Father Gaffney always wore a long black cape, lined with red. In pictures of him he always has this cape on. However, a habit of some of the men of the parish, who regularly stood in the back of the church during Mass, annoyed Father Gaffney no end. During the consecration of the Mass they would get down on one knee, and kneel in that position. From the pulpit, he used to encourage these men to come down the aisle to an empty seat. On at least one occasion he referred to these men as the "sharpshooters," very likely from the fact that during the Spanish-American War, the sharpshooters in the army were often pictured in this position.

#### Reverend John M. Brown

On a farm in the town of Clarendon, just south of Rutland, a son named John was born to Thomas and Mary Corbett Brown on February 7, 1861. John was one of eight children born to this couple. Early in life John learned the chores of farm life<sup>60</sup>.

When he reached school age he attended school at what was called "the East Street District School." This school was abandoned some years later, but before it was, John taught there for one term. After grade school he attended Wallingford High School, but completed high school at Rutland High School.<sup>61</sup>

In 1887-1888 he was a student at St. Joseph's College in Burlington, Vermont [then situated on the grounds of the Bishop DeGoesbriand Hospital]. There he was active in sports, especially baseball, playing first base for the college team. He is remembered telling later in life of a game with the University of Vermont. He said: "Imagine my surprise the next morning when I read in the *Free Press*, Brown four times at bat, four hits."

Since his family lived within the confines of the territory of St. Patrick's Church, in Wallingford, and they were faithful members of that church, he got to know Father Thomas J. Gaffney very well. Father Gaffney was the pastor of St. Jerome's, East Dorset, Vermont and Wallingford was one of his missions. He later served as an assis-





*Reverend John Brown was the 5<sup>th</sup> pastor of St. Peter's Parish.*



tant to Father Gaffney at St. Peter's Church, Rutland.

Following his two years at St. Joseph's College, Bishop DeGoesbriand sent him to the Seminary in Montreal. After a year there, he transferred him to the Sulpician Father's Seminary in Paris, France. It is said that he willingly went to Europe because he felt he would never have the opportunity to go there again. He also spent some time at the University of Innsbruck, Austria, and the seminary at the University of Munich, Germany. He was ordained a priest in the chapel at the University of Munich on June 29, 1891. He said his first Mass there the next morning.

Shortly after his ordination he received word that his mother was critically ill at home. He caught the first boat home, but a storm at sea delayed his arrival in New York. His mother died a week before he reached home. She was buried in Calvary Cemetery in the family plot.

Father Brown was well educated in theology and spoke six languages. His first assignment was at St. Francis de Sales Church in Bennington, an assignment which lasted only a few months.

On December 29, 1891, he was appointed an assistant at St. Peter's Parish. Father Gaffney, his old pastor from St. Patrick's, Wallingford, and a close friend, was now the pastor of St. Peter's. Besides the usual parish work, he served as treasurer of the Young Men's Catholic Union. In the council of this organization it is without a doubt his ideas and plans carried much weight. Because of his interest in baseball it is entirely conceivable that the YMCU baseball team received some impetus from him. His stay as an assistant to Father Gaffney lasted until October 10, 1897. No doubt it was a happy association.

Father Brown succeeded the Reverend Thomas Carty as pastor at St. Alphonsus Parish in Pittsford, Vermont. Old parishioners of St. Alphonsus still remember his quiet and kindly ways, and his dedication to them. While he was there the parish debt was liquidated, and the treasury accumulated a comfortable sum of money. He was their pastor for a few months more than nine years.

On January 13, 1907, Bishop Michaud appointed him to be the permanent pastor of St. Peter's Parish, Rutland. At this same time Holy Innocents' Parish was erected on the east side of Rutland and the Reverend William N. Lonergan became its first pastor.

Italian people had begun settling in Rutland some years before. On his arrival at St. Peter's, Father Brown began to learn his sixth language, Italian, so that he could hear their confessions and help them. Although he was never fluent in this language, according to some of the Italians, he nevertheless spoke the language well enough to be understood.

His kindness to the Italian people, especially after the failed attempt to build an Italian Parish in 1907-1908, is well known among the older Italians. When they approached Father Brown in the 1930's about a festival in honor of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, he not only went along with them but entered into the occasion. An Italian priest was obtained to preach a retreat or triduum for them and Father Brown took an active part in the procession with the Statue of the Blessed Virgin through the streets.

Because of his interest in young people, Father Brown was largely responsible



for the formation of the St. Peter's Athletic Association early in his pastorate. About 1916, he began to fix St. Peter's Field, which he had bought, for football and baseball games. He also put in a quarter mile cinder track for track and field events.

His interest in sports continued the rest of his life. In the early twenties when the Northern League, a professional baseball league, came to Rutland, he allowed the local entry in the league to use St. Peter's Field as their home field. There was a grandstand and bleachers on the field by this time. Later, local town teams made use of these facilities for baseball games. Rutland High School used the field, too, for its football, track and baseball teams until 1929 when the athletic field in back of the new Rutland High School on Library Avenue was opened. The field then became the home field for Mt. St. Joseph Academy teams. In 1938, when a Rutland team entered the newer Northern League, it also used St. Peter's Field. This league was composed mostly of college players. Father Brown attended many of the games that were played in Rutland. The league lasted until World War II and was reinstated after the war, but never regained the success it had had before the war.

Father Brown was enthusiastic about the operation and the improvements to the field. An ardent sportsman, he took pride in the fact that, in his earlier years during the deer season, he "bagged" a deer each year.

He was "recognized as a keen financier and business man." When Father Brown first came to St. Peter's in 1907, he had followed his friend and former pastor, Father Gaffney. The debts of the earlier years had all been paid before Father Gaffney's death. Because of some repairs that had to be made, and also because of paying an assessment to the newly formed Holy Innocents' Parish, Father Brown ended that year in debt. Thereafter, though, the parish always ended in the black until the depression years. On several occasions in the 1930's when the parish books ended the year in the red, "A friend of the Parish" always made up the difference so that the books balanced. This occurred even though there was money in the savings account. In 1945 the savings balance was some \$65,000.00.

Father Brown played the stock market and was very successful at it. It was known that by this means he became a man of considerable wealth. Some figured that before he died he had about \$350,000.00. Some years before he died he put the parish name on his bankbooks and stocks. In this way everything that he had became the property of St. Peter's Parish at his death.

In spite of his wealth, Father Brown was a man who was "poor in spirit." Although everything was kept in good repair, he never spent any money for frills. It is remembered that, for himself, he would buy a couple of light suit coats [possibly of cheese cloth] for \$1.98 to wear in the summer months around the rectory. His socks were bought at Woolworth's. The rectory furniture was of good, sturdy material, and kept in good repair, but without any luxury. Window shades, so attached that they rolled up from the bottom of the window to afford some little privacy, took the place of curtains or drapes. However, he did set a good table for his curates and guests.

Regarding the lack of frills in the rectory, he once said that many of his parishioners did not have as much in their own homes. He did not want to give them the appearance of luxury when they came to the rectory. "Let him [or them] pull it or haul it" was a favorite expression of his. We might call him the "unflappable" Father Brown.



He never seemed to get excited or too disturbed about things. He kept himself on an even keel. On one occasion, on a Sunday morning, the housekeeper rushed to his room to tell him that a portion of the house was on fire. She found him shaving, getting ready for the 10:30 AM Mass. Without interrupting his shaving, he simply said, "Call the Fire Department," and that was that.

In 1916, two celebrations were held in honor of his twenty-fifth anniversary of ordination; one by the school children, and the other by the adults of the parish. On June 22, 1916, "the children's token of affection for their devoted pastor, 1891-1916" was held in St. Peter's School Hall. It consisted of a "cadet drill" by the boys of the school who were dressed in dark blue suits and white tennis shoes. Following this there was a song of welcome by the girls. Recitations, songs and a violin duet made up the rest of the program.

On June 29, 1916, the parishioners honored Father Brown. Ex-mayor Henry C. Brislin acted as toastmaster. After a program that was composed mostly of musical numbers, Mr. Brislin presented Father Brown with a purse from the parishioners. Several priests were present. Finally, the Most Reverend Joseph J. Rice, the Bishop of the Diocese spoke.

All former pupils knew of Father Brown's interest in the children of the school. Every month when report cards were passed out, he came to the classrooms to distribute the reports. If a student did well he said a few words of praise and gave him a holy card. If he did not pass, he encouraged him to do better the next time, but no holy card.

His interest in education moved him to encourage the Sisters of St. Joseph to open the academy to boys as well as girls. The academy became co-ed in 1927.

A most hospitable man, he welcomed young priests as well as older ones, not only to the rectory but also to his table. He held many diocesan offices: Examiner of the Clergy, 1906-1910; a member of the Council of Vigilance and Censor of Books, 1910-1946; Diocesan Consultor, 1926-1943; and Dean of Rutland County Clergy, 1934-1946. In August of 1935, he was named a Domestic Prelate, with the title of Right Reverend Monsignor, by Pope Pius XI at the request of Bishop Rice, but declined the honor. In September 1945, Bishop Ryan requested Pope Pius XII to name him to the same honor and this time Father Brown accepted. Although he bought the robes of his office, and had his picture taken in them, he was never formally invested in his prelatical robes. However, he was laid out in them after his death.

On March 12, 1946, Father Brown was stricken with a heart attack from which he never recovered. He lingered until April 14, 1946 [a Sunday] when he died at 4:45 PM. With him at the time of death were the Reverend Michael Demasi and a small group of relatives. As the church bell tolled, announcing his death to the parishioners, a nun was heard to say: "He died on Palm Sunday, he is entering the heavenly Jerusalem."

Until Tuesday afternoon his body remained at the rectory. On Tuesday at 3:00 PM, his body was accompanied by a large gathering of priests. He was borne into the church, which was filled with parishioners. The priests recited the Office of the Dead. The Holy Name Society and the Knights of Columbus had a guard of honor which remained around the casket while his body lay in state. From 7:30 PM until 9:30 PM, the various parish organizations offered continual prayers for the repose of his soul.



On Wednesday morning three Masses were offered for the soul of Father Brown: one at 7:00 AM was attended by people who were unable to attend a Mass at 8:45 AM, which was offered by the school children. Finally, Bishop Edward J. Ryan offered a Funeral Pontifical High Mass, assisted by the Reverend L. R. Cain, as Deacon; and the Reverend William A. Crowley, as Sub-deacon. The Reverend Bernard Flanagan, Chancellor, was Master of Ceremonies. The Eulogist was the Reverend John Kennedy. Following the Mass, his body was carried to Calvary Cemetery for burial in the family plot. His brother, the Reverend Thomas Brown is also buried there.

### Reverend Robert F. Joyce

Father Robert Joyce was born in Proctor, Vermont in 1896. He graduated from the University of Vermont in 1917 with Phi Beta Kappa honors. After six years of study under the Sulpicians in the Seminary of Philosophy and the Grand Seminary in Montreal, he received the degree of Licentiate in Theology. He was ordained to the priesthood on May 27, 1923, in Burlington by Bishop Joseph Rice.

His first assignment was at St. Michael's Parish in Brattleboro. He then moved to St. Francis' Parish in Bennington. He became the administrator of St. Paul's Parish in Manchester for a while, before being appointed principal of Cathedral High School in Burlington. In 1932, he was made pastor of St. John's Parish in Northfield.

In 1943, Father Joyce was granted a leave of absence to serve as chaplain in the U.S. Army. He spent most of his stint in the United States with the exception of one year in England. In May of 1946, he was discharged with the rank of Major. Almost immediately he was appointed pastor of St. Peter's Church in Rutland. While at St. Peter's, Father Joyce undertook a major renovation of the interior of the church. Money left by Father Brown was used for this purpose.

Father Joyce held many diocesan offices during his stay at St. Peter's. He was a pre-synod judge of the diocesan marriage court, Director of the Holy Name Society, and District Director of the National Council of Catholic Women. He was also Spiritual Director of the Newman clubs at UVM and Norwich University.

On July 8, 1954, Father Joyce was elected Titular Bishop of Citium and appointed Auxiliary Bishop to Bishop Ryan. On January 2, 1957, he was appointed Bishop of Burlington.

In 1963, he was elected to St. Michael's College's Delta Epsilon Sigma Catholic Honor Society. Over the years, he has received honorary degrees from UVM, St. Michael's College and Norwich University. He attended all four sessions of the Second Vatican Council in Rome.

Bishop Joyce resigned as Ordinary of the Diocese on December 18, 1971. After that he lived at the St. Joseph Home in Burlington, continuing to be an active priest helping out in various parishes around the state.

### Reverend William A. Crowley

Another native son of St. Peter's Parish returned to be the seventh pastor in a little more than 100 years. William A. Crowley was born in Rutland on April 8, 1900, the son of Timothy E. and Mary Agnes (O'Connell) Crowley. After attending St. Peter's School, he went to Montreal College (Le Petit Seminaire), the Seminary of Philosophy





*Reverend Robert Joyce was the 6<sup>th</sup> pastor of St. Peter's Parish.*



and the Grand Seminary. He was ordained on May 29, 1926, in the Cathedral at Burlington by the most Reverend Joseph J. Rice, D.D., and the following morning he celebrated his first Solemn Mass at St. Peter's Church.

After serving as an assistant at St. Michael's Parish in Brattleboro and St. Paul's Parish in Barton, he was named administrator of St. Rose of Lima Parish in South Hero and later pastor of St. Louis Parish, Highgate, Vermont.

While at St. Louis Parish, Bishop Brady asked Father Crowley to attend the Catholic University to take a degree in education. After returning from Washington, D.C. in 1943, Bishop Brady appointed him as the Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Burlington, a post he held for 17 years. During this time he resided at St. Joseph's Home for the Aged on North Prospect Street, in Burlington.

During the early years in Burlington, he was also an instructor of religion at Trinity College, taught in the summer sessions at St. Michael's College, Winooski, Vermont, and gave courses in psychology to the student nurses at the DeGoesbriand and Fanny Allen Hospitals.

At one time or another he was a member of the executive board of the National Catholic Education Committee, a member of the elementary department school board of that association, and co-author of a book *These Are Our Schools*, published by the Superintendent's Department of the National Catholic Education Association.

He was also the Bishop's representative to the National Catholic Hospital Association, and a member of the advisory board of the Vermont Hospital Commission. In 1950, he was named a domestic prelate by Pope Pius XII with the title of Right Reverend Monsignor.

After the death of Monsignor McGarney on December 15, 1951, Monsignor Crowley was named to succeed him at St. Stephen's Parish in Winooski, Vermont. In 1952, St. Michael's College deemed him a worthy candidate for the honorary degree of Doctor of Law and conferred it upon him at its June graduation.

In March 1957, Bishop Joyce named him pastor of his native parish, St. Peter's in Rutland. Upon his appointment at St. Peter's he said, "It is pleasant to be recalled to one's native parish." He arrived at the rectory amid piles of books and unplaced furniture brought from St. Stephen's. He remarked "it's as much trouble to throw things out as to take them with you."

For eight years Monsignor Crowley presided over the temporal and spiritual affairs of St. Peter's Parish. His unfailing kindness, his cheerful hospitality toward his brother priests, his guidance and advice to parishioners and priests, his willingness to take on any task, were the marks of this brilliant priest.

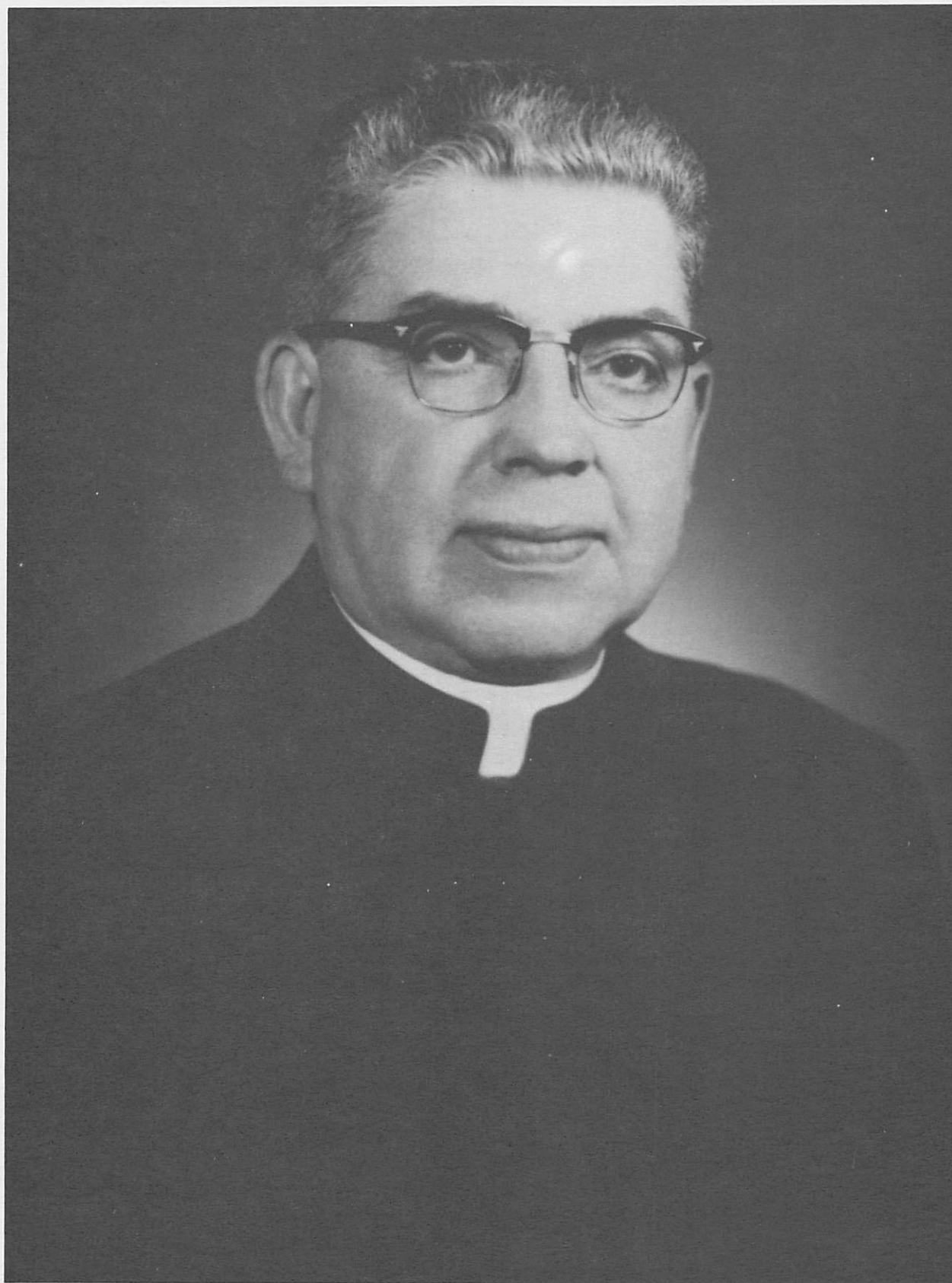
Monsignor Crowley was a member of the Rutland unit of the National Conference of Christians and Jews and also a member of the Vermont Historical Society.

Early in February he became ill, and was taken to the DeGoesbriand Hospital in Burlington, where he died on March 5, 1965.

His wake was held at the home of his sister, Mrs. Robert A. Lawrence of 87 Brown Street. From there his body was brought to St. Peter's Church on Monday afternoon. The visiting clergy recited the Office of the Dead in English.

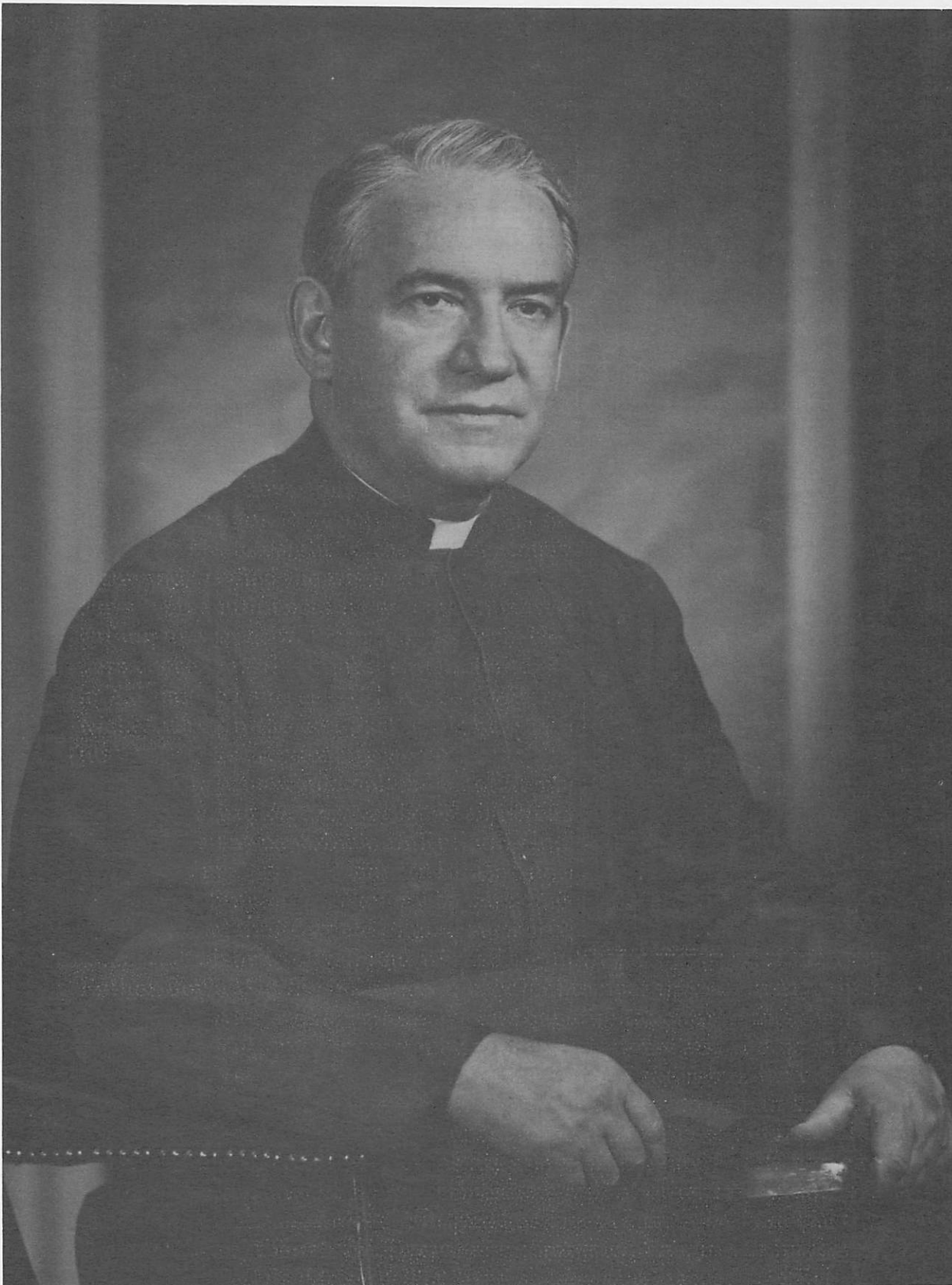
On Tuesday, March 8, a Solemn Requiem High Mass was celebrated. With the bishop presiding, Monsignor Crowley's brother, the Reverend Frederick J. Crowley,





*Reverend William Crowley was the 7<sup>th</sup> pastor of St. Peter's Parish.*





ST. PETER CHURCH

*Reverend Thomas Connor was the 8<sup>th</sup> pastor of St. Peter's Parish.*



pastor of St. Dominic's Parish, Proctor, celebrated the Mass. He was assisted by the Reverend Joseph F. Connally of East Dorset as Deacon, and the Reverend Wendell H. Searles, Principal of Mt. St. Joseph Academy as sub-deacon. The eulogist was the Reverend Louis E. Gelineau, chancellor of the diocese of Burlington. Monsignor Crowley was buried in Calvary Cemetery, at the foot of the large Celtic Cross, beside the grave of Father Gaffney, who was the pastor of St. Peter's when Monsignor Crowley was born.

#### Reverend Thomas H. Connor

Reverend Thomas H. Connor was born in Proctor, Vermont, on October 25, 1909. After graduating from Proctor High School in 1927, he enrolled in the two-year pre-seminary course at St. Michael's College. He completed studies in Philosophy and Theology at the Grand Seminary in Montreal. With Father Francis McDonough, he was ordained to the priesthood by Archbishop Alfred Deschamps in St. James Cathedral, Montreal, on June 15, 1935.

After a temporary assignment as chaplain of St. Joseph's Orphanage in Burlington, Bishop Rice assigned him to be assistant pastor of St. Michael's Church in Brattleboro and principal of St. Michael's High School. In 1936, following a brief assignment at Cathedral Parish in Burlington, he came to St. Peter's where for the next eight years he served as assistant to Monsignor John Brown.

In 1939, he was delegated by Bishop Brady to organize the Boy Scout Program in the parishes of the Diocese. Two years later, he undertook the establishment of the Catholic Youth Organization [CYO], which he directed until 1956.

In 1944, Father Connor was named pastor of St. Patrick's Parish in Wallingford, which included St. Mary of the Hills Church in Mt. Holly as a mission. In 1960, upon the resignation of Father Jeremiah O'Brien, he was assigned to St. John the Baptist Parish in Castleton, where he also served as chaplain to the Catholic students at Castleton State Teachers' College. In March of 1965, the pastorate of St. Peter's Church became vacant due to the death of Monsignor William Crowley and Father Connor was assigned as pastor of St. Peter's on April 4 of that year.

Upon the termination of the Second Vatican Council in 1965, Father Connor was designated as chairman of the newly-formed Diocesan Pastoral Council, through which councils comprised of clergy, religious and laity were organized in each deanery and parish of the diocese.

With the retirement of Monsignor John Kennedy as pastor of Christ the King and Dean of the Rutland County Clergy, Father Connor succeeded him as Dean and as a member of the Diocesan Board of Consultors. On March 22, 1970, Father Connor was invested as a Domestic Prelate of Pope Paul VI with the title of Monsignor.

During his pastorate at St. Peter's, the parish planned the observance of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Dedication of the Church, which was dedicated on June 29, 1873. In addition to a program of spiritual renewal, the parish undertook the physical improvement of the century-old church. This included the construction of the St. Joseph Entrance, the installation of a new steeple, which had been donated by a life-long parishioner, and the renovation of the church interior in compliance with the liturgical norms of the Second Vatican Council. These improvements were completed



## Chapter 7 Pastoral Care

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before the Centennial Dedication ceremony, which was presided over by Bishop John Marshall on July 1, 1973.

On October 6, 1975, the State of Vermont was shocked by a gruesome head-on collision on Route 7, which killed Monsignor Connor and five others. Monsignor was on his way to make a long-awaited visit to the Holy Land. The people of St. Peter's parish were little prepared for his untimely death. He was a priest well known and loved for his Christian kindness, generosity, and understanding. On the first anniversary of his death, the large playground on lower Meadow Street was dedicated in his memory, and a simple monument and plaque were erected. He had previously been instrumental in arranging the transfer of this property to the City of Rutland for recreational use.

As these men ran the course, in faith and hope, their spirit and accomplishments have become a part of the heritage of the parish and an inspiration to those of future generations.

<sup>1</sup> *A History of the Archdiocese of Boston*, Vol. II, p. 50

<sup>2</sup> *Centenary Book of the Diocese of Burlington*, 1853-1953

<sup>3</sup> Reverend Joseph Couture, S.S.E., *The Catholic Clergy of Vermont*

<sup>4</sup> *History of the Archdiocese of Boston*, Vol. II, p. 106

<sup>5</sup> *Centenary Book of the Diocese of Burlington*, 1853-1953, p. 25

<sup>6</sup> *The History of the Archdiocese of Boston*, Vol. II, pp. 569-573

<sup>7</sup> *Centenary Book of the Diocese of Burlington*, 1853-1953, p. 27

<sup>8</sup> *The History of the Archdiocese of Boston*, Vol. II, pp. 552-553

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 106

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 276

<sup>11</sup> Z. Thompson, *History of Vermont*, 1842, pp. 201-202

<sup>12</sup> Golden Jubilee Booklet of St. Bridget's Parish, West Rutland, Vermont, 1910

<sup>13</sup> Z. Thompson, *History of Vermont*, 1842, pp. 201-202

<sup>14</sup> *History of the Archdiocese of Boston*, Vol. II, pp. 569-573

<sup>15</sup> Bishop's Diary, November 5, 1853.

<sup>16</sup> Reverend Joseph Couture, S.S.E., *Catholic Clergy of Vermont* and Hemenway, *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, 1882

<sup>17</sup> Bishop's Diary, January 1854

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, July 22, 1856

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, January, 1854

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, March 19, 1854

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, August 3, 1854

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, April 20, 1854

<sup>23</sup> Reverend Joseph Couture, S.S.E., *Catholic Clergy of Vermont*,

<sup>24</sup> Bishop's Diary, October 3, 1854

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, November 16, 1856

<sup>26</sup> Hemenway, *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, Vol. 4



- <sup>27</sup> Bishop's Diary, December 24, 1863
- <sup>28</sup> Hemenway, *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, Vol. 4, p. 286
- <sup>29</sup> Bishop's Diary, January 4, 1858
- <sup>30</sup> St. Albans, Vermont, *Messenger*, January 29, 1891
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid
- <sup>33</sup> Montpelier *Argus*, July 21, 1864
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid, July 28, 1865
- <sup>35</sup> Hemenway, *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, Vol. II, p. 339
- <sup>36</sup> Ibid and *History of the Catholic Church in New England*, Vol. II, p. 555
- <sup>37</sup> Reverend Joseph Couture, S.S.E., *Catholic Clergy of Vermont*
- <sup>38</sup> Ibid
- <sup>39</sup> Hemenway, *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, Vol. IV, p. 423
- <sup>40</sup> Reverend Joseph Couture, S.S.E., *Catholic Clergy of Vermont*
- <sup>41</sup> St. Albans *Messenger*, January 20, and February 5, 1891
- <sup>42</sup> *The Catholic Church in New England*, Vol. II, pp. 539-540
- <sup>43</sup> Ibid, p. 511
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid, Vol. II, p. 538
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid, pp. 511-512
- <sup>46</sup> *Rutland Herald*, July 30, 1881
- <sup>47</sup> *Rutland Herald*, March 29, 1884 and October 22, 1885
- <sup>48</sup> Ibid, January 10, 1887 and September 12, 1906
- <sup>49</sup> Bishop's Diary, August 23, 1864
- <sup>50</sup> Ibid, August 16, 1865
- <sup>51</sup> *Rutland Herald*, January 10, 1887
- <sup>52</sup> *The Catholic Church in New England*, Vol. II, pp. 510, 511 and 528
- <sup>53</sup> *Rutland Herald*, January 10, 1887
- <sup>54</sup> Ibid, April 20, 1887
- <sup>55</sup> *Rutland Herald*, September 12, 1906
- <sup>56</sup> Ibid, October 17 and December 23, 1891
- <sup>57</sup> Ibid, September 12, 1906
- <sup>58</sup> *Rutland Evening News*, September 12, 1906
- <sup>59</sup> Ibid,
- <sup>60</sup> Reverend Joseph Couture, S.S.E., *The Catholic Clergy of Vermont*
- <sup>61</sup> *The Rutland Herald*, June 23 and 30, 1916, and April 16, 17 18, 1946



Our Mother of Sorrows Parish, 1907-1908

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Italian people began to settle in the Rutland area. Most worked in the marble industry, on the railroad, or in the woods, cutting and planting trees. Their wages were \$1.25 a day, the prevailing wage for manual labor. A day's work was 10 hours.

In 1893, Father Gaffney in his annual parish report noted that there were seven Italian families in St. Peter's Parish. This number grew. By 1906 and 1907, the Italian population of Rutland and the vicinity was estimated at between 500 and 800. Some lived in Center Rutland, West Rutland, Proctor and Fair Haven. These people were Catholics but had little, if any, knowledge of the English language. Some did join the existing parishes, but the majority never, or seldom, went to church.

In 1906, the Reverend Francis Crociata, an Italian priest, came to Danby to work among the Italians who lived there. Father Crociata had been ordained on June 1, 1901 by Bishop Cajetan Quottrochi of Mazarien, Italy. He was a Sicilian whose first years were spent in pastoral work in the diocese of Mazarien, Italy. About 1903 or 1904, he came to the United States and worked in New York State prior to coming to Vermont. Upon his arrival in Vermont in 1906, Bishop Michaud gave him the care of the Italian-speaking Catholics in the Rutland area.<sup>1</sup>

In the summer and fall of 1906, [from July] he was in Danby. The Baptismal Register of Holy Trinity Church in Danby lists several baptisms performed by him. Among the priests who attended the funeral of Father Gaffney on September 14, 1906, there is listed "Reverend Frank Crociata of Danby, Vermont."<sup>2</sup>

Early in 1907, he came to Rutland and settled for a time, at least, on Cleveland Avenue, between State Street and Library Avenue.<sup>3</sup> At this time there was an Italian Club situated on Evelyn Street just around the corner from West Street [in back of what is now the A&J Auto Parts building at 176 West Street]. One of Father Crociata's first tasks in Rutland was to meet some of the Italians. He banded them together and rented a hall next door over the Rutland Star Lunch and began to say Mass for the Italians. This hall was used for three or four months. A move was then made to use the hall over the Italian Club for Sunday Mass. Tradition has it that he eventually lived in this hall and took his meals with different Italian families. These places of worship were called the Church of Our Mother of Sorrows.

The Rutland Directory of 1907-1908 listed the church at 3 Evelyn Street [page 308] and Father Crociata's residence on Cleveland Avenue [page 39], although his name was listed as Reverend Francis "Crossway." The Sunday Masses were at 8:30 and 10:30 AM. There were also weddings,<sup>4</sup> funerals<sup>5</sup> and baptisms.

In the fall of 1907, plans were made to build an Italian church in Rutland. On October 17, 1907, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington bought a parcel of land for \$200.00 from the estate of the late William H. Dunton. This land was situated on the west side of Evergreen Avenue that extended from the Flory property on Columbian Avenue. It was behind the houses on Evergreen Avenue and extended back to the rear of the Watkins Avenue School. There were entrances to the property both on Evergreen Avenue and State Street.<sup>6</sup> [In the 1950's Enos Courcelle, an Evergreen Avenue



florist bought this property from the diocese and later sold it to the New England Telephone Company.]

The lot for the proposed Church of Our Mother of Sorrows is hilly, even today. Originally it was a much steeper hill. Immediately after acquiring the lot, the Italian people, under the direction of Father Crociata, began to cut down the hill, dug a cellar hole, and laid the foundation for the new church. [To get to the spot today one must still climb the steep slope]. "Eight men with teams of horses were put to work at this." Evidently, there were many large boulders that had to be rolled out of the way during the digging of the cellar.<sup>7</sup>

"Many of the 500 or more Italians in the city and the vicinity volunteered their services, and subscriptions are coming in rapidly. The structure, an ornament to the city, will cost \$15, 000.00. The design, furnished by George Underwood after a church in Italy, will be drawn up by A. H. Smith of Rutland. Each Italian will contribute the amount of a day's wage toward the construction costs."<sup>8</sup> During this time the Evelyn Street site of the Church of Our Mother of Sorrows was used for Mass as well as funerals and weddings. Mr. Pasquale [Pat] Romano says that he was the first altar boy for Father Crociata. At that time Mr. Romano was 8 or 9 years old.

Mr. Romano claims that the attendance at Sunday Mass was small, at both Masses although some Italians did come on the trolley cars from Fair Haven, West Rutland and Center Rutland.

From the beginning, this project had the approval, at least tacit, of the other Catholic pastors in Rutland. In fact, "the Reverend Norbert Proulx, pastor of Sacred Heart of Mary Parish [now Immaculate Heart of Mary] even helped to select the land for the new Italian Church." [Father Proulx spoke Italian]. Only recently the St. Stanislaus Parish had been established in West Rutland for the Polish-speaking Catholics there.<sup>9</sup> Thus the project seemed to be only a matter of time.

But, in December 1907, the attitude of the Rutland pastors [Fathers Brown and Proulx] changed, much to the consternation and disappointment of the Italians, especially Father Crociata. What brought about this change of attitude? From what is stated in the *Herald*, the Italians were planning to raise funds for their church building by asking the parishioners of other parishes to contribute. Father Brown is reported to have said "they intend to make a house to house canvas among you" [the parishioners of St. Peter's]<sup>10</sup>.

For years in Italy the church and its support came from the government of Italy. When the Italians came to the United States, they were not familiar with the system of personal support that existed here. Thus they would not give to the support of the church. At this time Father Brown was having difficulty balancing his own accounts at St. Peter's and Father Proulx had in the late 1890's finished building Sacred Heart of Mary Church and undoubtedly did not have it paid for.<sup>11</sup>

On December 8, 1907, both Father Brown and Father Proulx spoke out at the Sunday Masses against their parishioners contributing to the new church.<sup>12</sup> Speaking about the new church these pastors said that "the Italians were giving scarcely nothing themselves and were depending upon the other Catholics of the city to build the church for them." The parishioners of St. Peter's and Sacred Heart parishes were told that "they ought to do nothing for the new church until they were satisfied that



they had done all that they should for their own church."

On Monday December 9, 1907, Father Crociata and Vito Manfreda went to Burlington to see Bishop Michaud. The Bishop was indisposed that day. [He had been in poor health.] They had to talk to his representatives. On their return they said that the church would be built. They were given permission four months ago. The foundation was already laid, the land paid for, and there was over \$400.00 in the treasury.<sup>13</sup>

Bishop Michaud, through his representatives, had suggested to Father Crociata that he buy the old Catholic church on Meadow Street and Father had rejected this proposition. However, the Bishop gave them permission to conduct a bazaar, providing they kept the rules and regulations of the Church in this matter.

During the same week Father Brown went to Burlington to see the Bishop. Because of the controversy the Bishop decided to give some guidelines in this matter in order to calm the contending parties. The letter addressed to both the *Rutland Herald* and the *Rutland Evening News* laid down these conditions. It was dated December 14, 1907. The bishop's letter was published in the two papers on December 17, 1907:

All parishes have fixed and defined limits, whether by reason of territory or by reason of nationality of the people for whom a parish is established. Each parish, whether the limits are territorial or national, is chiefly and primarily responsible for its own support and maintenance as well as for the outlay in erecting whatever buildings its needs may demand. In localities where two or more parishes exist, whether their limits be territorial or national, the people may offer whatever help they are able and inclined to give, to any parish they please; this may be by way of donations, say for the benefit of a fair, in money's worth, or by attending such a fair and patronizing it as they see fit. But it is contrary to all custom for the rector of any parish to go, send, or procure the sending of agents, outside the limits of his own parish for the purpose of soliciting subscriptions for his parish work, while his own people are not asked to subscribe or even when asking his own people to ask also those of another parish to subscribe to and assist in the erection of his parochial buildings as though such buildings were their own. ... Permission to erect new buildings in a parish is obtained from, and plans for the same are approved by, the bishop in every case; and both must be in writing. The Bishop never grants this permission, or approves of plans, when conditions are such that a given parish cannot reasonably be supposed capable of meeting the projected building expenses.

Reverend Francis Crociata obtained our permission to secure a lot and to begin the foundation for a church; everything to be done and paid for by his people, with any help that others might wish to give them. The foundation being finished, nothing more was to be done until he received further orders from us. Plans have not yet been submitted; so neither plans nor cost has yet received our approbation or sanction. The Reverend Rector of the Italian parish assured us that he could obtain from each member of his congregation a monthly subscription, and that this



subscription together with the work his own people could give would be sufficient to cover the cost of erecting the new church. In no case, does the diocese assume any responsibility without the express sanction and approbation of the bishop in writing.

From what has been written there is no need to say that quite a controversy had arisen in Rutland over this matter. This is one reason why the bishop stepped in to try to bring some measure of calm. In the aftermath of the Bishop's letter, the *Rutland Evening News* reported the following:

Nothing was said about the Italian church project yesterday by any of the local Catholic pastors except Reverend J. M. Brown of St. Peter's. Father Brown stood by his guns and declared he had no reason to retract anything he said the previous Sunday. He emphatically denied that he was hostile to the Italian people or opposed to the building of the Italian church. He said however, that he wished to prevent his people from being imposed upon, and that it was easy to infer from his remarks that he believed the Italians would never be able to complete the proposed expensive church.

I told you last Sunday that we had reason to believe that the Bishop had not given his sanction to the building of the expensive church the Italians have planned. This has been contradicted since, so in order that no one may accuse me of falsifying I wish to tell you today that I have seen the Bishop and he assured me that he has never approved the plans for the proposed church. I do not accuse anyone else of falsifying, but I do not believe these people understand whether the plans have been approved or not.

We are not hostile to the Italian people or indifferent to their spiritual welfare. I myself have taken the trouble to learn their language, so that I might hear their confessions and minister to them when they are dying. That, you will admit, is no easy task for a man of forty. But, I am here to protect you from being imposed upon and I intend to do my duty. The Irish are a generous race and are apt to let their sympathies get the better of their judgement. The Italians are not putting their money into this project. They do not seem to have the confidence in it that some of you do.<sup>14</sup>

The newspaper commented that it had been learned from other sources that the older Catholic congregations in Rutland accused the Italians not only of being poor givers, but of being indifferent Catholics. It is charged that of the 800 or more Italians in Rutland, only a very small number are ever seen in church. A count was made of the attendance at the Church of Our Mother of Sorrows on Sunday. There were 17 persons at one Mass and 25 at the other. The question was asked how Father Crociata expected to build an expensive church with a congregation of that size.

It was reported that the building committee of the diocese, of which the Reverend W.N. Lonergan of Rutland was a member, must approve the plans for the proposed Italian church before the actual work of construction could be begun. It was understood that this committee would recommend to the bishop that the present quar-



ters of the Italian congregation were ample for this need; and that the building of the new church ought to be postponed until Father Crociata's building fund was considerably larger. Father Lonergan considered \$2,000.00 little enough to begin on.

The key to the problem of building the church was expressed by Father Brown: "I do not believe these people understand whether the plans have been approved or not." They did have permission from the bishop to buy the lot, to dig the foundation, and to hold a bazaar to raise funds. But the permission for the plans for the church and its cost had not been given. Since the Italians did not speak good English, this distinction somehow escaped them. However, the bishop's letter spelling out the conditions for building did calm the tempest stirred up by this affair, and the excitement subsided.

Except for letters to the Editor of the *Rutland Herald* on December 13, 1907, [page 2, columns 4 and 5], and December 21, 1907, [page 4, Columns 3 and 4], nothing more appeared in the paper's columns about the controversy. The only other time that it was mentioned was at the end of February 1908, when the Italians held a week's bazaar in Baxter Hall. In the February 25, 1908, issue of the *Herald*, there was an article describing the bazaar held on the previous evening. About 200 people attended. Koltonski's orchestra of five pieces furnished music for dancing. Other entertainment was also presented. Misses Underwood and A. Clifford assisted at the booths. Again, the next evening, a like number attended. But Thursday evening only 100 persons were present, with 30 couples dancing. From the accounts in the newspapers there does not seem to have been too much enthusiasm generated.<sup>15</sup>

Thereafter there seems to be no further mention of the construction or costs of the church of Our Mother of Sorrows. Services continued to be held at the Evelyn Street church but these seem to have stopped completely sometime later in 1908. [The last baptism performed by Father Crociata that was noted in the baptismal register was August 23, 1908]. Father Crociata left Rutland shortly after and from then on the Italian people came under the jurisdiction of St. Peter's Parish.

An item in the *Rutland Herald* of September 14, 1908, states that to settle a chattel mortgage held by F. A. Gonyea, the interior of Our Mother of Sorrows Church on Evelyn Street has been dismantled and the furnishings removed. Altar fixtures and sacred vessels were removed by a priest of the city, acting under orders from the bishop. This action did not mean that the church was closed permanently but in fact it was the end of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish.



## Chapter 8 Our Mother of Sorrows Parish, 1907-1908

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- <sup>1</sup> Reverend J. Couture, S.S.E., *Catholic Clergy of Vermont* and *Rutland Herald*, December 10, 1907
- <sup>2</sup> *Rutland Herald*, September 15, 1906
- <sup>3</sup> Rutland Directory, 1907-1908
- <sup>4</sup> *Rutland Herald*, February 26 and 27, 1908
- <sup>5</sup> *Rutland Herald*, February 14 and 15, 1908
- <sup>6</sup> *Rutland Herald*, July 1 and 9, 1907 and Rutland City Land Records, Book 24, p. 36
- <sup>7</sup> *Rutland Herald*, October 22, 1907
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid, December 10, 1907
- <sup>10</sup> *Rutland Evening News*, December 1907
- <sup>11</sup> Annual Parish Report, 1907
- <sup>12</sup> *Rutland Herald*, December 10, 1907
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid
- <sup>14</sup> *Rutland Evening News*, December 17, 1907
- <sup>15</sup> *Rutland Herald*, February 25, 26, 27, 29 and March 2, 1908



### The Loretto Home

One of Father Boylan's dreams that was not realized in his lifetime was a Catholic Old Ladies Home. This was mentioned in the tribute paid to Father Boylan by Dr. Charles Woodhouse, a non-Catholic friend.

Such a home was needed for the number of aged Irish ladies who, after years of service as maids and cooks in some of Rutland's wealthier families, had to retire with no place to go. Also, many widows of advanced age needed a place to spend their declining years. True, there was a Protestant Old Ladies Home [now called Sunset Home] on North Main Street, run or supervised by the Rutland Missionary Association. But there was no Catholic institution for the retired elderly Catholic ladies whose working days were over.

As a token of his admiration for Father Boylan, the Reverend Thomas J. Gaffney was able to realize this dream of his predecessor. On September 9, 1901, Father Gaffney bought a house lot from Frederick and Johanna Sabourin for \$250. This lot was situated on the west side of Meadow Street, opposite Convent Avenue.<sup>1</sup> It measured 67 feet on Meadow Street and was 233 feet deep toward East Creek.

On March 16, 1903, Father Gaffney asked for and received permission from the Board of Aldermen to remove the house on the lot [known as the Whitcomb House] from its location to the third lot south of the present lot. He also received permission from the Aldermen to build a four-story brick block for an Old Ladies Home. The dimensions of the new building were to be 40 feet by 62 feet. It was to contain 42 rooms.<sup>2</sup>

The very next day preparations were made to remove the house. The house had to be jacked up, large rollers were placed under it, and with two teams of horses pulling, the house was rolled to the new lot and set on its foundation.<sup>3</sup> Then the construction of the new building was started. The contractor was Frank Conniff of Evergreen Avenue.

The following week the *Herald* reported that Patrick Cummings of South Street had been awarded the contract for the brickwork on the building. All that spring and summer his crew of brick masons worked away. By the first of October 1903, the exterior of the building and the interior lathing had been completed. The plastering of the interior walls was finished early in November.<sup>4</sup>

On October 3, 1903, Father Gaffney again approached the Board of Aldermen to ask permission to dig a ditch in Convent Avenue from a point opposite the Convent to the Loretto Home. This ditch was for the purpose of laying a gas pipe from the point where it entered the Convent. The new gas pipe was laid into the Loretto Home with the fixtures in each of the rooms.<sup>5</sup>

In November 1903, the Francis Tracy Heating & Plumbing Company were engaged in installing the furnace, pipes and radiators in the new building.<sup>6</sup> The *Herald* reported on November 16, 1903, that "a force of carpenters was engaged in putting up steel ceilings last week" and that "an elevator will be put in position this week, but the building will not be ready for occupancy until the latter part of next spring."

On February 24, 1904, the *Rutland Herald* ran the following article in



its columns:

The Catholic Old Ladies Home, which is being erected by the Reverend T. J. Gaffney on Meadow Street, is about completed. The exterior is finished and the carpenters have got through working on the inside. W. O. LeClair's men are now at work painting the interior, and when that work is done the building will be ready for occupancy.

The Home is four stories high and has all the modern conveniences. It is lighted by gas and heated with hot water. An elevator runs from the basement to the top floor, and speaking tubes are placed in the hallways of every floor. The kitchen and laundry are in the basement and are about ready to use. The first floor has a dining room, chapel, reception room and parlor. The color scheme is green and gold. In the chapel there is a statue set into the wall and the wall around it has been tastefully decorated by W. O. LeClair.

On the second floor there are 12 rooms, a spacious hall, toilet, and bathroom. A radiator has been put in each room. The third floor has 13 large rooms like the other rooms found on the second floor. The fourth floor contains two large dormitories, which run the length of the building, separated by a hall. These may be partitioned off into rooms if this is judged necessary later.

When Father Gaffney signified his intention of building the Home, he meant to complete it without any financial aid from outsiders, but as several people volunteered to help in the work by sending contributions of money or materials, he finally consented to receive assistance from those interested in the institution.

The Home is not essentially a Catholic Home, as people who are not Catholics will be admitted. It will accommodate 50 people and will be under the supervision of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

On April 13, 1903, just about the time the Loretto Home was started, Father Thomas J. Gaffney sold the property to the Sisters of St. Joseph Society for one dollar and other valuable considerations.<sup>7</sup>

In 1904, Father Gaffney gave stocks valued at \$8,685.00 and cash amounting to \$2,367.03 to the Sisters of St. Joseph for the support of the home. This was left as a trust fund and only the interest could be used for the Home.<sup>8</sup>

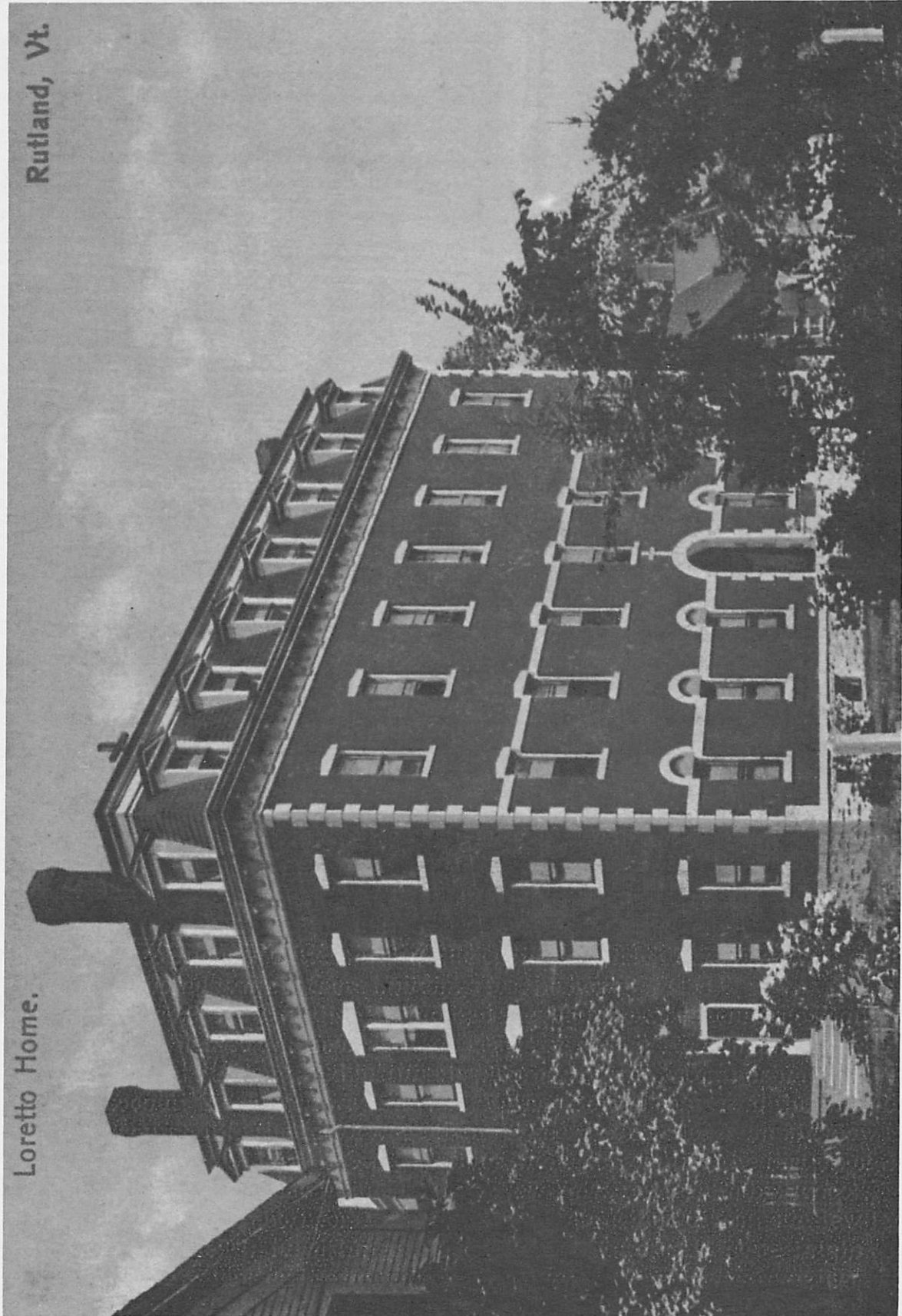
On April 17, 1904, about 75 Knights of Columbus, after attending Benediction at St. Peter's Church, were taken on a tour of the new Home by Fathers Gaffney and McGarry.<sup>9</sup>

On the afternoon of the 24<sup>th</sup> of April 1904, a society, known as the St. Joseph's Guild, was organized among the parishioners of St. Peter's Church at a meeting in St. Peter's Hall. The object of the Guild was to aid the Sisters of St. Joseph in their various works of charity, especially in caring for the Loretto Home for old ladies. A committee of 15 was elected to promote the interests of the Guild.<sup>10</sup>

On May 17, 1904, the Loretto Home was opened to the public in the afternoon. A reception was held at the Home. In the evening the St. Thomas Council of Temperance held a whist party, attended by 300 people. About \$50.00 was realized by this



RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY



*The Loretto Home was opened in 1903. This was a dream that Father Boylan did not live to see come to reality.*



party.<sup>11</sup>

When the first guest or resident was admitted to the Home is unknown. There is no record of how much it cost to care for a resident, but a flat fee of \$300.00 was required for entry and the guest was then taken care of for the rest of her life. Sister [now Mother] Gabriel told of one lady who, at a later date, paid a flat fee of \$800.00 and lived in the Home for over 30 years. Sister Mary Bernadine was in charge of the Home and had two assistants, Sister Mary Rita and Sister Mary Elizabeth. A sister, who did the cooking, also lived there. In those early days there was very little extra help. Sometimes the postulants and novices were sent over from the Motherhouse. How many entered the Home is anyone's guess.

When Holy Innocent's Parish [now Christ the King] was established on the east side of Rutland in January 1907, the Reverend William N. Lonergan, the first pastor, lived at the Loretto Home for better than a year, while a rectory was being sought within the parish. On Thanksgiving Day, November 26, 1908, the *Herald* noted that Father Lonergan's Mass that day, would be in the chapel of the Loretto Home. He lived in the large room to the left of the main entrance. On Sundays the Opera House was his church.

In 1909 the Loretto Home was valued at \$25,000.00, according to the City Assessor's records. About 1920, there were 18 to 20 guests. This number stayed very constant until about 1940. During these years the money received and expended was under the supervision of the motherhouse. The Sisters of St. Joseph who worked there received no salary, just their room and board.

In 1939, each resident gave \$1,000.00 to enter the Home and in addition paid \$10.00 a month while living there. For this the sisters provided not only room and board, but also non-prescription medicines. From 1939, Vermont Catholic Charities began to send aged women to the home from other parts of the State of Vermont, and paid the usual fee for each of them.

Sister Mary Bernadine left the Home in December 1941, after so many years of faithful service. She was succeeded in January 1942 by Sister [now Mother] Gabriel. Because the Sisters of St. Joseph could not continue to finance the Home, the running of the Home was taken over by Vermont Catholic Charities in March of 1942. From then on all the bills were sent to the Burlington office, and Father Cain, the Director, agreed to send the Home money every three months to pay for its running expenses.

Because of the involvement of Vermont Catholic Charities in the running of the Home, the number of guests rose to 28 in 1942. In 1945, this agency was responsible for getting a Vermont Old Age pension for the needy guests. In Sister Gabriel's years, the entry fee rose to \$1,500.00.

The old elevator in the building was little better than a dumbwaiter. It was a lift operated by pulling on a rope, which would make it rise or descend. It was situated to the right of the present stairwell in the center of the building. On the fourth floor a door, to the right of the stairs, is all that remains of the old shaft. It was small and perhaps had a capacity of four or five people. In 1948 Sister Gabriel began to inquire into a new elevator. Miss Josie Hay of Rutland gave her the first \$1,000 toward it and many other Rutland friends of the Home donated the rest of the money. The tower on the south end of the building was built by Vermont Catholic Charities and the eleva-



tor was installed at a cost of \$13,000.00.

Over the years the Catholic Daughters of America raised money for the Home. Girls or women from the Colony House on Columbian Avenue were hired to help the sisters. A nurse, Miss Penders, was also hired to help care for the sick in the Home.

In August of 1951, Sister Gabriel was elected the Mother-General of the Sisters of St. Joseph. She had to relinquish her job as sister-in-charge of the Home to Sister Mary Ambrose. During Sister Mary Ambrose's years as supervisor, Vermont Catholic Charities built a new chapel, enlarged the dining room in the basement, and built some guest rooms on the first floor and in the basement.

In 1954, the Loretto Home was transferred from the care of the Sisters of St. Joseph, to the care of the Daughters of Charity of the Sacred Heart from Newport. At this time the Home was leased to Vermont Catholic Charities for 100 years. Since that time these latter sisters have had charge of the institution.

Except for the years when Father Lonergan lived at the Home, Mass was offered there only occasionally. St. Peter's Parish had charge of the Home and the priests would come over to the Home for Mass. Priests who were visiting in the parish often came during the week to offer Mass. In the late 1950's, the Bishop assigned a chaplain to the Home. The first priest to be so assigned was the Reverend Raymond Blais. He was succeeded by the Reverend Francis McDonough. Following Father McDonough's tragic automobile accident which left him blind, the Reverend Edward L. Hebert was stationed at the Home for a few months until Father McDonough returned. In the fall of 1969, Father McDonough retired from the active ministry in the diocese and went to live in Florida. The Reverend Patrick T. Hannon was then assigned as chaplain at the Home.

These priests have lived in what was formerly the chapel. The body of the chapel, two sets of three pews separated by a center aisle, is now the priests living room. The bedroom and bathroom occupy the space of the former sanctuary and altar.

In the late 1960's Mrs. Anna Mathews left \$135,000.00 to the Home. With this money, and also some from Vermont Catholic Charities, the Anna Mathew's Annex was added to the Home, just north of the old building. The new and old buildings were connected by two enclosed walkways, one in the basement of the building connecting the dining room with the new building, and the other on the first floor connecting the two buildings. An elevator was installed in the new building for the convenience of the guests. A large lounge was built into the new section.

The guests now pay a monthly stipend. In the early 1950's it was \$55.00 a month; in the late 1950's it was raised to \$75.00 per month; later it was \$85.00; then \$100.00 and at present \$150.00 a month. For this they have room and board, care if they are sick for a few days [they go to the Rutland Hospital for longer illnesses], and the care of their rooms and laundry.

At present there are 56 guests, 38 in the old section and 18 in the new, among whom there are a number of non-Catholics. In the basement of the new building there are two suites of rooms for retired priests. Each consists of a sitting room, bedroom and bathroom.

In the summer of 1970, a new elevator was made possible by a bequest in the will of the late Miss Minnie Ryan, who lived for several years at the Home, and whose



## Chapter 9 The Loretto Home

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former home was on the northwest corner of Meadow Street and River Street in Rutland.

The name “Loretto Home” is taken from the Feast of the Translation of the Holy House of Loretto, celebrated in the church calendar on December 10. It commemorates the translation of the house, where the Incarnation in Nazareth took place, to Loretto, Italy, in 1295.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup> City of Rutland Land Records, Book 15, p. 317

<sup>2</sup> Board of Aldermen Minutes at City Hall and *Rutland Herald*, March 17, 1903

<sup>3</sup> *Rutland Herald*, March 18, 1903

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, March 24, 1903

<sup>5</sup> Board of Aldermen Minutes at City Hall and *Rutland Herald*, October 6, 1903

<sup>6</sup> *Rutland Herald*, November 10, 1903

<sup>7</sup> City of Rutland Land Records, Book 15, p. 570

<sup>8</sup> Sisters of St. Joseph Archives

<sup>9</sup> *Rutland Herald*, April 18, 1904

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, April 25, 1904

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, May 18, 1904

<sup>12</sup> Abbot Gueranger, O.S.B., *The Liturgical Year*, Volume I



Parish Societies, Organizations and Activities

A society, according to Webster is “a voluntary association of individuals for a common end, especially an organized group working together because of common interest and beliefs” or “an enduring and cooperating social group whose members have developed patterns of relationship through interaction with one another.”

The societies that were organized in St. Peter's Parish had a twofold purpose: (1) A positive one, to encourage the habit of virtue and the practice of religion, and (2) a negative one, to overcome the evils of the day; i.e. drinking and fighting. Reading the constitution and by-laws of the Literary and Benevolent Society, the Ancient Order of Hibernians, and the other societies brings this out clearly. Father Boylan, and later Father Gaffney, used these societies “to tame the somewhat turbulent Irishmen” and the good that was done cannot be measured. The *Herald* commented on the first St. Patrick's Day celebration as follows: “...their [the members of the Hibernian Literary and Benevolent Society] manly deportment and martial bearing were highly complimented by all observers.... We must say that everything terminated with much credit to all connected with the affair”<sup>1</sup> This showed the men the esteem that they could have from their fellow citizens, as well as giving them the satisfaction of a job well done. Granted that a minority may not have been positively influenced, yet the majority was improved as a result. The actions of the majority could not help but have an influence on this minority. After Father Boylan's death, the *Middlebury Register* stated that Father Boylan “did a noble work in training and guiding in the way they should go, the somewhat turbulent element that for years made up a large part of the town's population.”

Although some of the first Irish who arrived in Rutland had received some education in Ireland, a great majority had not. The schools of the parish were a great aid not only for providing the children with the opportunity for an education, but also inculcated habits of industry, honesty, sobriety and obedience to the laws of God and of the Church.

The first society of which there is mention, is found in the records of the deaths in St. Peter's Parish beginning in 1865. The following men were elected for the year 1865:

President, Reverend Charles Boylan; Vice-president, Michael Cunningham; Treasurer, John Hanley; Secretary, Allistar Delisle; Corresponding secretary, J. D. Lyston; Librarian, Thomas McMahon.

The Visiting Committee included: Owen Riordan, for the Nebraska District; James Lyston, for the Center Rutland District and John Landers, for the Mendon District.

The nature and purpose of this organization is speculative because nothing further than these names is given. The names of other members are not given nor is there even an indication that there were other members. However, since the officers given are found in the record of deaths, it can be surmised that they had something to do with the deaths in the parish. Was it to notify Father Boylan about someone seriously ill or dying in the individual's district? [There were no telephones at that time.]



Or was it attending wakes to say the Rosary in the place of the pastor when he was unable to attend? Or did it have something to do with the new cemetery on West Street, either in arranging for burial plots or their upkeep. Nothing definite is known about the organization.

### St. Peter's Hibernian Benevolent Society

The first recorded society in the parish was the St. Peter's Literary and Benevolent Society, sometimes referred to as St. Peter's Hibernian Benevolent Society. This was a local unit of a national society.

This local unit was introduced in Rutland about 1867. Beside its social aspects, the organization was an insurance society. The latter purpose was the "the relief of sick members, the burial of the deceased, and also the relief of widows and orphans of deceased members, as far as the society may think proper."<sup>2</sup> It had the usual officers and met monthly.

To become a member, a man must be of good moral character, attend to his Easter Confession and Communion, and to the principal Christian duties on Sunday. He must be free from infirmity or disease, and must be over sixteen and under forty-five years of age. Members of the society were elected singly, no more than one member being balloted at a time. A person was considered a member only when his name was written in the Society's books and he had paid his initiation fee.

Among the penalties imposed by the society upon its members were the following: "Any member who shall make use of profane, vulgar, or indecent language during a meeting shall, for the first offense, be fined one dollar; for the second, five dollars; and for the third, expelled. Any member who shall be guilty of immoral practices, such as habitual drunkenness, fighting, or abusing his family, or in any way giving marked scandal, shall upon conviction, be suspended or expelled as the members may determine. Any member who shall neglect his general religious duties, such as hearing Mass, going to confession, etc., will ipso facto cease to be a member."

Attendance at the funeral of a deceased member was mandatory. The members met at the residence of the deceased and marched to church to attend the funeral. Failure to meet this requirement, except for sickness or absence from town, resulted in a fine of one dollar.

Once a member's monies reached \$1,000.00, that member when sick, was entitled to receive \$3.00 for each week of his sickness, and medical attention during his sickness, providing he had been a member for one year. When any member of the Society died, his relatives or friends received \$20.00 to help defray the expense of the funeral. The expenses for the religious services were defrayed from the funds of the Society. This assistance was given to the family of the deceased even though the Society funds were under \$1,000.00.<sup>3</sup>

The St. Peter's Literary and Benevolent Society had a long and useful career in the parish. It was in existence until the late 1920's when it disbanded.

When Rutland celebrated its Centennial in October 1870, this society took part in the festivities, demanding the right because one of the original grantees of the town was an Irishman, named John Murray, who had been a resident of Rutland, Massachusetts.<sup>4</sup>



The first officers mentioned in the local newspaper were as follows: President, Reverend C.J. Boylan; Vice-president, Thomas McMahon; Secretary, John P. Collins; Treasurer, John Caden; Marshall, Michael McGinn; Committee on Funeral Rites, John Costello, J. McGuirk, and Dennis Kinsley [Kingsley].<sup>5</sup> They were elected at a meeting of the Society on November 5, 1871.

In July 1870, the society initiated an annual picnic for the benefit of St. Peter's Church. For years this event was held at Pierpoint's Grove, south of the old Catholic Cemetery on the banks of the Otter Creek. The day was usually July 4. Many of the people first attended High Mass at the church and then marched, with a band at their head, through the streets to the picnic grounds. Once there the band played through the day. At noon the women served a lunch and the afternoon was given over to outdoor sports [races of all sorts and lengths].<sup>6</sup>

Some years there were prize drills by bands from all over the state for a prize of \$50.00. Refreshments were usually served throughout the afternoon. Some years a string band played for dancing. The newspaper account of July 4, 1872, notes that "the military companies present drilled and acquitted themselves creditably," and in 1877, "everyone amused themselves on the swings. It was an enjoyable occasion."<sup>7</sup>

This yearly event was held for the benefit of the church. An admission of 25 cents was therefore charged for admittance to the grounds. The picnic lunch no doubt was paid for as well as the refreshments during the day. This social event was usually largely attended and raised about \$400.00 a year toward Father Boylan's expenses.

The Society took part in various Church processions. On Easter Sunday, 1873, they took part in the procession from the old church on Meadow Street to the new church on Mechanic Street [now Convent Avenue]. At the High Mass for the dedication of the new St. Peter's on June 29, 1873, they acted as ushers and by their timely presence and kindly offices did much toward putting everyone in place.<sup>8</sup> The Society also took part in the Consecration of the new Calvary Cemetery on June 28, 1891.<sup>9</sup> They organized and took part in the first public celebration of St. Patrick's Day and in subsequent celebrations in honor of St. Patrick.

The Society's monthly meetings were held in the schoolhouse in the early years. Usually they elected officers at their January meeting. However, with the organization of the Ancient Order of Hibernians in January of 1875, interest in the Hibernian Literary and Benevolent Society seemed to wane. In March of 1877, they were asked to reorganize. They met at Simon's Hall in the Cramton Block on Merchants Row and actually did reorganize.<sup>10</sup> For a couple of years thereafter their monthly meetings were held in Nickwackett Hall.<sup>11</sup> In August of 1881, the Society was granted the use of the village hall by the village trustees.

After the reorganization, this group was referred to as St. Peter's Hibernian Benevolent Society. Their benefactions toward their sick members and toward the family of deceased members continued, but at present are known only to God.<sup>12</sup> In 1886 they dispensed \$600.00 to the sick among their 100 or more members. In a flourishing condition in 1888, the society paid out \$300.00 from the \$400.00 in its treasury, to aid their sick members in 1888.<sup>13</sup>

On November 5, 1891, after the Society's fair was held in the Town Hall, the *Rutland Herald* reported that: "The Society has over 100 members and is purely be-



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nevolent. In case of sickness, a member is entitled to \$3.00 a week and medical assistance [in those days \$1.00 a day was the usual wage for a working man]. When he dies his family is entitled to a fixed sum for the funeral expenses. During the past year the society has paid out \$1,500.00. The object of the fair was to replenish its treasury."<sup>14</sup> The fair raised \$600.00 for the society, which was organized 15 years previous and in 1891 had 110 members in good standing.<sup>15</sup>

Through the St. Patrick's Day entertainment, funds were raised to replenish the treasury.<sup>16</sup> In 1892, there were 200 members and over \$500.00 was paid out in benefits to the sick. In January 1893, there was only \$12.00 left in the treasury.

At its annual meeting in January 1893, P. A. Caten was elected president; Vice president was J. J. Monahan; Recording secretary, D. A. Caten; Financial secretary, G. H. Martin; Treasurer, J. J. Fox, and spiritual director was Father Gaffney.

The good done by this society in the parish was unmeasured. The moral training of its members and the financial assistance in their time of need, can only be known to God.

### St. Patrick's Day Celebrations

In 1869, the Irish Societies of St. Peter's Church, East Rutland, and those of St. Bridget's Church, West Rutland, joined together to celebrate the anniversary of Ireland's patron saint. The Irish Societies of St. Peter's Church attended a 9:00 AM. Mass at the Meadow Street St. Peter's Church, while those of West Rutland attended an 8:30 AM Mass at St. Bridget's. Led by St. Peter's Cornet Band, the St. Peter's Literary and Benevolent Society marched down West Street to Center Rutland, where they met the St. Patrick's Literary and Benevolent Society, led by the General Sarsfield Band, which had marched over from West Rutland. The two groups with their bands playing then marched down Main Street to Washington Street and down Washington Street to Merchants Row.<sup>17</sup> On Merchants Row the procession halted, faced to the west, and saluted the United States flag and a handsome regimental flag which were suspended from the upper window of Major Kingsley's store. Continuing down Merchants Row, they turned down West Street and proceeded to St. Peter's Schoolhouse on Meadow Street.

Each Society member wore beautiful and appropriate regalia and their manly deportment and martial bearing was highly complimented by all observers. At 4:30 PM all attended Benediction at St. Peter's Church. After supper was served at the school, they were entertained by vocal selections. To end the festivities, at 7:00 PM the Reverend Thomas Halpin gave a lecture which was open to the public. This was the first time that St. Patrick's Day was celebrated in Rutland and everything terminated with much credit to all connected with the affair.<sup>18</sup>

Prior to 1868, the day was celebrated privately by most Irishmen in town. On March 17, 1870, there was no parade in Rutland because a delegation of the East Rutland and West Rutland Irish went by train to Burlington to take part in honoring St. Patrick in that place. That evening the Opera House was the scene of a lecture, "Native Land," by the Reverend M. J. Keating, followed by a farce put on by the Emerald Dramatic Club entitled, "Handy Andy." Admission was 50 cents. A band furnished music. "The good old Saint met with a warm reception in all hearts."<sup>19</sup>



For the 1871 celebration, units of the Irish Societies of Burlington and Hinesburg joined the Rutland and West Rutland units in the local parade. Following a Solemn High Mass, a parade under the direction of Edward Lyston, Chief Marshall, formed about 1:00 PM in front of St. Peter's Academy. It was led by St. Mary's Cornet Band of Burlington, followed by the Burlington and Hinesburg units and the St. Peter's and St. Bridget's Society and Band. The parade followed the same course as the 1868 parade. Three hundred and forty people took part. Following a banquet at St. Peter's Academy, they went to the Rutland Opera House to hear a lecture and singing by the school children.<sup>20</sup>

In 1875, the St. Patrick's Day celebration was under the direction of the newly formed Division #1 and #2 of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. After attending Mass, the local unit of the Ancient Order of Hibernians went to West Rutland to join with that unit to parade through the village of West Rutland. Catching the noon train for Rutland, a parade began at 2:00 PM through the streets of Rutland and ended at the Town Hall. Refreshments were served at the Town Hall.<sup>21</sup> In the evening, there was a complete Irish program of recitations, with songs by James Murphy between the readings.

All the Irish Societies of the State were invited to take part in the St. Patrick's Day celebration in 1876. The parade formed at 2:15 PM, led by Dr. J. H. Hanrahan as Chief Marshall, Special Aide James Tigue and Assistant Marshals: John P. Crowley, James O'Dwyer and James Murphy.<sup>22</sup> The St. Mary's Band of Burlington was followed by the various Irish Societies through the principal streets of the village, ending at Simon's Hall on Merchants Row where speeches, toasts and vocal entertainment followed.

Year after year, the Rutland Irish celebrated St. Patrick's Day. In 1886, the French Society of St. John the Baptist, joined the Rutland Irish Societies and the Bellows Falls Society to form a parade of over 300 in the line of march.<sup>23</sup>

Soon after the 1886 celebration, the St. Patrick's Hibernian Benevolent Society decided against having a St. Patrick's Day parade because of the expense involved. The evening entertainment continued for years, into the 1920's.<sup>24</sup>

### St. Peter's Cornet Band

In the winter of 1867-1868, the St. Peter's Cornet Band was organized [at this time the French Canadians were members of the parish]. It is first mentioned in the first celebration of St. Patrick's Day. The Cornet Band led the St. Peter's Literary and Benevolent Society from the church to Center Rutland and thence through the streets of Rutland.<sup>25</sup>

On May 20, 1870 it was on a serenading tour of the town and made a call at the *Herald* office. The *Herald* reported, "They have made good improvement during the past winter and discoursed most excellent music."<sup>26</sup> This band does not seem to have been in existence too long when its members joined the Rutland Brass Band. At the second annual meeting of the Hibernian Society, the Rutland Brass Band furnished the music.

In October 1870, on the fourth day of the celebration honoring the centenary of Rutland, the St. Peter's Cornet Band led the Irish Societies of Rutland in the pa-



rade.<sup>27</sup> In the St. Patrick's Day parade of 1871, it was under the direction of Professor F. Wilson.<sup>28</sup>

Who belonged to St. Peter's Cornet Band is not known. Many of the members of the Rutland Cornet Band were probably members of the St. Peter's Cornet Band.<sup>29</sup> The Rutland Cornet Band had the following roster: A. Valiquette, Drum Major; W. Simpson, Director; M. Collins, Leader; W. Kane, E flat Cornet; M. McCormack, B flat Cornet; T. Leonard, B flat Cornet; Mark Richardson, B flat Cornet; C. Channel, B flat Cornet; J. Hanley, Solo Alto; E. G. Prime, First Tenor; E. Maranville, Second Tenor; W. A. Hill, Baritone; W. J. Gilson, B flat Bass; J. Willard, E flat Tuba; W. Mahar, E flat Tuba; W. F. Stiles, Snare Drum; M. Kimball, First Bass; C. J. Hill, Cymbals. The officers were: W. C. Landon, President; N.F. Stiles, Treasurer; M. G. McCormack, secretary; W.A. Hill, Business manager.

### St. Aloysius Society and the League of the Sacred Heart

The St. Aloysius Society of St. Peter's Church had an election of officers on November 25, 1878. The following were elected: President, P. Carroll; Vice-president, E. Burns; Secretary, J. Sanborn; and Treasurer, J. Donnelly.<sup>30</sup> Little else is known of the Society. The League of the Sacred Heart was organized and a new statue of the Sacred Heart was blessed on October 27, 1889.<sup>31</sup>

### The Choir

In the more solemn ceremonies of the church, a choir is a necessity. Father Boylan was not lax in obtaining a choir. While the church was on Meadow Street, a choir composed of school children was formed and Miss Margaret Collins, the sister of the schoolmaster, John Collins, played the harmonium for the singing.<sup>32</sup>

The choir took part in the ceremony in honor of the Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Mary on June 4, 1871,<sup>33</sup> and no doubt in all the other annual crownings, as well as at High Mass on Sundays and Benediction.<sup>34</sup>

When the first Mass was said in the new church, Easter Sunday, April 13, 1873, the choir led the procession from old St. Peter's to the new St. Peter's and sang the Mass. On the day of the dedication of the new St. Peter's the choir "rendered the music in a beautiful manner."<sup>35</sup>

The original organ in the church "had scarcely volume enough for so large a church."<sup>36</sup> Father Gaffney took up a subscription to buy an organ in memory of Father Boylan. This organ was installed and dedicated on July 4, 1887.<sup>37</sup> A choir of 30 voices under the direction of Mr. T. Delisle took part in the dedication Mass. It was noted that "the volume of the new organ completely fills the church." Miss Bridget Clifford, organist for the previous 18 years presided at the new organ. Later that month, on July 14, Father Gaffney treated the choir to a picnic at Lake Bomoseen.

At the Midnight Mass, December 25, 1889, St. Peter's choir of 35 voices assisted by Miss Annie Gooley, rendered the music. Mrs. J. D. Hanrahan, Miss Connie Glynn, Alto, and Mr. W. J. McKeaugh, Tenor, were the soloists.<sup>38</sup> In the spring of 1891, a new boy's choir was organized under the direction of the Reverend D. E. Coffey.

<sup>39</sup> Apparently there was also a St. Cecilia's Society which gave a concert at the fair for the new French Church in Rutland.<sup>40</sup>



### Father Mathew Juvenile Total Abstinence Society

In 1828, the Vermont Temperance Society was organized. Through the years many Protestants opposed the Society. Temperance means moderation. The proponents of the Temperance Movement meant by it the enforcement by law of complete abstinence from all alcoholic beverages. In this context, the name is a gross misnomer.

The first state of Vermont prohibition law was enacted in 1852. Wine was permitted for sacramental use. County commissioners appointed town agents who could sell liquor for medicinal, chemical or mechanical use. More than one town agent in Vermont became involved in some illegality relative to the sale of liquor.

During the half-century of the Great Thirst many farmers and townspeople managed to convert hard cider into a heady potion. Liquor was smuggled into the state in ways not unfamiliar to some of those devised during the thirteen years of that mirage called Prohibition in the United States.<sup>41</sup> [The Volstead Act].

In Rutland, hard liquors, as well as wine and malt beverages, could be obtained by those who desired them. They were for sale in Rutland or a person could go over the state line to Hampton, New York, to obtain a supply. The Irish, who are known for their drinking and pugnacious behavior, often got drunk on Saturday nights, and very frequently got into fights among themselves. From stories of the early days, the covered bridge on West Street was one of the spots where many of the fights took place. From all reports, Father Boylan was called out on many Saturday nights to break up the fighting Irishmen.

"Reverend Father Boylan was a typical Irish priest. ...A strong man, physically and mentally, he went to Rutland when it had just begun to grow, did a noble work in training up and guiding in the way they should go, the somewhat turbulent element that for years made up a large part of the Town's population. He was an ardent temperance advocate, and many a dance where liquor flowed too freely has been broken up by him and his stout cane."<sup>42</sup>

If there was one thing that made him angry, it was the news and sight of his parishioners, becoming less than men, injuring their health, depriving their families of necessities and giving bad example to the young as well as their neighbors, by their drinking and carousing.

Determined to do more than he had already done, he decided to found a total abstinence society. On St. Patrick's Day, 1871, he founded the Father Mathew Juvenile Total Abstinence Society at St. Peter's. At the High Mass that morning he gave the pledge to over 200 boys and young men. A banner and their regalia were blessed.<sup>43</sup>

This movement was started by Father Theobald Mathew, O.M. Capuchin, the Apostle of Temperance in Ireland, who began his temperance crusade in Cork on April 10, 1838. The movement spread through Ireland. New England took up the temperance movement for reasons of Irish patriotism as well as for moral reasons. The movement is still strong in Ireland.

The object of this society as disclosed in its constitution is to present a united effort in the promotion of the cause of total abstinence. There can be no doubt but that



Father Boylan had prepared the boys and young men not only by sermons but also by visits to the school for the formation of this society. His purpose was to plant in the minds of the young the idea of temperance to counteract the example given by their elders and also to make the adults think in terms of temperance and thus lessen the effects of "demon rum."<sup>44</sup>

For several years thereafter, this organization is mentioned in connection with the May crowning and with the procession proceeding the dedication of the church.

It is very probable that later the Bishop took up the cause of abstinence and made it a part of his talk after Confirmation. Bishop Rice, Bishop Brady, Bishop Ryan and Bishop Joyce followed this practice.

### The Ancient Order of Hibernians

The Ancient Order of Hibernians was organized in New York City on May 4, 1836. [In Ireland, it began in 1565]. It is an American fraternal organization and assists by every honorable means, the interests and welfare of those with Irish heritage.<sup>45</sup>

The Society has four purposes: 1.To promote friendship, unity and Christian charity among its members; 2.To aid and advance by all legitimate means, the aspirations and endeavors of the Irish people to independence from English rule; 3. To uphold and sustain loyalty to the government of the United States of America by the members of the organization living in America; 4.To foster the ideals and cultivate the history of the Irish race.

The motto of the Society is "Friendship, Unity and Charity." It helps the aged, the sick, the blind, and the infirm. The Golden Rule receives practical illustration in the charity that the order dispenses, in the intimate bond of union that exists among its members. Practical Catholics only, that is men who comply with the religious obligations imposed by the Church, are eligible for membership. Should a member fail in this necessary requirement, should he fail to give edification, he becomes liable to the penalty of expulsion.<sup>46</sup>

To become a member, a man must be of Irish birth or descent through either parent, a practical Catholic, between the ages of 16 and 45, and in good bodily health. Men over 45 could become social members with the right to vote and hold office, but without the benefits in case of sickness or death.

The local units of the organization are called Divisions. Initiation fees, monthly dues, and sick and death benefits are fixed by the local divisions, and subject to the approval of the County Board.

The local Division of the Ancient Order of Hibernians was organized in the spring of 1874. It met monthly and was active from 1875 in the St. Patrick's Day celebrations. Its meeting place was at Simon's Hall on Broadway [Merchants Row], South of West Street.<sup>47</sup>

This organization enjoyed great popularity. In fact, after 1900 interest grew and so did the membership. State conventions as well as County conventions were held regularly. The State conventions were held every two years, e.g. in 1904 in Burlington, in 1906 in Montpelier and in 1908 in Rutland.

In 1908, James E. Burke of the West Rutland Division #2, was the outgoing



president. This convention was a two day affair, August 24 and 25, 1908.<sup>48</sup> On Monday, August 24, there was the registration of delegates and meetings of various committees, plus a banquet for 250 people. On the 25<sup>th</sup>, there was a parade from the Odd Fellows Hall through the streets of the city to St. Peter's Church. The line of march included, in order: the state officers, 20 members of the Emmet Knights of West Rutland, ten members of the Ludlow Division in uniform and 50 members of the Juvenile Division of West Rutland. They were followed by the Rutland, West Rutland, and other visiting Divisions with more than 175 men in line.

At St. Peter's Church a solemn High Mass took place at which the Reverend William O'Sullivan, the State Chaplain, was the speaker. Following the Mass the line reformed and marched to the Eagles Hall for refreshments.

After the luncheon, a general meeting of the delegates was held which closed the convention. The secretary reported that there were now 810 members in the state, an increase of 242 in the last two years.

James E. Burke of West Rutland, the outgoing president, addressed the convention. He thanked them for their confidence in his administration for the past six years, having re-elected him in 1904 in Burlington and again in 1906 in Montpelier. He touched on the formation of the ladies auxiliary and noted that several new Divisions had been formed throughout the state. Next he mentioned the military department. The past year had seen the formation of a military company in Division #2 in West Rutland: the Emmet Knights, Company A, first regiment. The Juvenile Division had a flattering beginning during the previous year in Division #2 in West Rutland with 50 charter members. Next the study of the History of Ireland was encouraged. Already a few Divisions had taken up its study. A History of Ireland had been placed in the library at St. Peter's School and at Holy Innocents School.

The celebration of St. Patrick's Day was required by the constitution as a National Holiday for the order and its observance should be held. For the next two years, the motto for the Ancient Order of Hibernians would be "shooting for 2000 members by 1910."

The new officers for the next two years were: President, Patrick Mahoney of Poultney; Vice-president, James Fitzpatrick of Graniteville; Secretary, Thomas Wright of Burlington; and Treasurer, J. J. Rock, of Ludlow. Among the Divisions mentioned were Montpelier, Richmond, White River Junction and those of Rutland and West Rutland. The Ladies Auxiliary met at the G.A.R. Hall for their state convention.

On October 4, 1908, the Rutland County Convention was held at the K. of C. Hall at 2:00 PM.<sup>49</sup> The reports showed that one new Division had been organized at Hydeville, and also that there had been a membership gain of 180 men in the County Divisions. The County officers were: President, Thomas Mullaney of West Rutland; Vice-President, J. P. Connors of Proctor; Financial Secretary, William McLaughlin of West Rutland; Corresponding Secretary, Thomas O'Leary of Poultney; and Treasurer, Patrick Mooney of Pittsford. A resolution was passed to have a chapter of Irish History read at every meeting of the various Divisions in the County. State President, Dr. Patrick Mahoney, presided.

For nearly the next 30 years, the Ancient Order of Hibernians was very active among the Irish of Rutland. On August 31, 1901, an excursion to Island Park in North



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Hero was organized over the Rutland Railroad, with the train leaving the station at 10:15 AM and returning that evening.<sup>50</sup> Other social and athletic events were held from time to time. At one of their meetings a boxing match took place. James Reynolds, a Rutlander, was one of the fighters.

St. Patrick's Day was always celebrated in a grand fashion, with a dinner and local vocalists and entertainers. Many of the older generation look back with nostalgia on those good "old days" and the good times that were enjoyed by members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians.

A Juvenile Branch of the Ancient Order of Hibernians in Rutland was organized January 19, 1909, for boys ages 10 to 18, with 35 charter members. President, Raymond Cocklin; Vice-President, Jerome Morris; Recording Secretary, Mason Welch; Financial Secretary, Daniel Callahan; Treasurer, Charles Fox; Sergeant-at-arms, Henry Eastman; and Doorkeeper, Francis Daley.<sup>51</sup>

### Young Men's Catholic Union

The purpose of this organization was the educational, literary and social advancement of its members. It seems as though there were two organizations with this name with the same purpose. One was the Young Men's Catholic Literary Union, and the other was the Young Men's Catholic Union.

The Young Men's Catholic Literary Union was organized in 1881 for the purpose of giving social and literary entertainment. In January 1882, its officers were: President, P. H. Dolan; Vice-President, James Levins; Secretary, P. M. Meldon; Financial Secretary, O. F. Cummings; Treasurer, J. P. Crowley and Sergeant-at-arms, P. McHugh.<sup>52</sup> This organization apparently elected officers every quarter.<sup>53</sup> In addition to their regular monthly meetings, the organization gave entertainments several times a year. These usually consisted of vocal and instrumental music, readings and recitations.

Membership in this Literary Union reached 50 in 1882.<sup>54</sup> At first the meetings took place in a hall in the Chaffee Block, but later they were held in the Armory Hall on Merchants Row and later still in the Chaffee Hall.<sup>55</sup> On May 28, 1882, a very interesting and pleasant social and literary entertainment was held.<sup>56</sup> In April 1882, new officers for the next quarter were elected: President, P. M. Meldon; Vice-president, James Levins; Secretary, John D. Spellman; Financial Secretary, J. J. Dyer; Treasurer, John P. Crowley; Sergeant-at-arms, J. J. Rourke.<sup>57</sup>

On May 24, 1883, the *Herald* noted that "the Young Men's Catholic Union gave a literary entertainment and social at Chaffee's Hall. Afterward, dancing was enjoyed by a large number."<sup>58</sup> In 1887, the Young Men's Catholic Union opened a gymnasium and clubrooms in the school building on Meadow Street, and they were in use each night. Its members exercised in the gymnasium almost every night.<sup>59</sup> The organization, under this name, seems to disappear after this date.

On January 4, 1891, Father Gaffney announced a meeting of the young men of the parish at St. Peter's Hall for the purpose of organizing the Catholic Young Men's Union. The purpose was to give entertainment and provide social events among its members.<sup>60</sup> The next evening, a large number of young men met to organize. It was stated that its objective was the moral, intellectual and social advancement of its



members. It was planned to have a library, reading room and eventually a gymnasium. The ways that they would fulfill their object was by lecture, musicals and dramatic entertainment.<sup>61</sup> The following Sunday, the meeting that was adjourned from January 5, reopened at 2:30 PM.

The following officers were elected: President, T. W. Moloney; Vice-President, Dr. J. H. Reilly; Secretary, P. F. McManus and Treasurer, Reverend D. E. Coffey.<sup>62</sup> It was voted that all Catholic clergymen of the diocese of Burlington were deemed eligible for membership. A Catholic man became a member by being elected by a 2/3 vote of the members present at any regular meeting.

It was voted that their clubrooms would be located either on Center Street or on Merchants Row and they were to be outfitted at an expense not exceeding \$400.00.<sup>63</sup> The site chosen was on Merchants Row [then named Broadway from West Street south].<sup>64</sup> In 1893 this space was enlarged by renting new rooms in the Sawyer Block on Evelyn Street. These adjoined the old rooms on Broadway.<sup>65</sup>

In 1891, there were 32 members in good standing; in 1893, there were over 90; and this later grew to more than 200.<sup>66</sup> In addition to their meeting room, there was a reading room, card room and billiard room. The rooms were open from 10:00 AM to 10:30 PM. In 1893, when the rooms were enlarged, a gymnasium and bathrooms were added.<sup>67</sup> The rooms were formally opened on March 11, 1891 with a large number attending. They planned and put on an entertainment and the play "Robert Emmett" for St. Patrick's Day on March 17, 1891. The Opera House was filled to capacity and the Union realized about \$300.00 from this program.<sup>68</sup>

After Easter, on April 9, the YMCU sponsored a "Ladies Night." Two hundred and seventy-five persons patronized it. After the program, the members served cake, ice cream and lemonade to their guests. The remainder of the evening was spent in card playing, singing and visiting. It was a very enjoyable evening.

From the beginning, the regular monthly meetings were held on Sunday at 2:30 PM.<sup>69</sup> Beginning in January 1892, their monthly meetings were held on the second Wednesday of each month instead of on Sunday.<sup>70</sup>

In May 1891, a library committee was formed to solicit books and periodicals and the library was opened. Over the years, more books were added and it grew into a very worthwhile library.<sup>71</sup> In May they also began to plan to hold a picnic. The date of July 18<sup>th</sup> was picked and the place was Allen's Grove, north of the village. When the day arrived, a great crowd of Rutlanders attended. All sorts of track and field events were held. A baseball game between West Rutland and Proctor completed the afternoon's activities. That evening, the YMCU gathered at St. Peter's Hall for an evening of dancing and refreshments. The society realized \$200.00 from the day.<sup>72</sup>

On October 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> of 1891, a National Convention of the Young Men's Catholic Union was held in Philadelphia and the local unit voted to send three delegates.<sup>73</sup> To complete their activities for 1891, they arranged an excursion over the Delaware and Hudson Railroad to Albany, New York, to attend a play. The round trip fare was \$1.75. A large group of members and their guests took in this event. There were 7 passenger cars and 243 excursionists.<sup>74</sup>

In November, plans were made for a series of entertainments during the winter months. These were to be held for the benefit of the members and were to be eight in





*Richard Ryan was President of the Young Men's Catholic Union in 1893.*



number. The first was planned for the second week of January.<sup>75</sup> At their annual meeting on January 13, 1892, the following men were elected officers: President, Richard Ryan; Vice-President, J. W. Burke; Secretary, A. P. Hogan and Treasurer, Reverend John M. Brown. [Father Brown had replaced Father Coffey as an assistant at St. Peter's just ten days before].

On January 29, the first of a series of talks for the members of the YMCU was announced. It was to be given by T. W. Moloney, then a young lawyer and later to be well known in local politics. His subject that Wednesday evening was "Personal Privileges and Property Exemptions."<sup>76</sup> This series continued through the winter and terminated with a play given on March 1, 1892, on Ash Wednesday evening.

In May of 1892 the YMCU organized a baseball team. The following men made up the team: Foley, Pitcher; Hurley, Catcher; Keefe, 1<sup>st</sup> Base; Kelley, 2<sup>nd</sup> Base; Leonard (Capt.), 3<sup>rd</sup> Base; Carroll, Shortstop; Brown, Left Field; Conniff, Center Field; and Stone, Right Field. They played a number of games including one with the West Rutland Parnells. The final score was Parnells 6 and YMCU 5.<sup>77</sup>

In the summer of 1892 a musical was held on June 15 at the YMCU rooms on Broadway [Merchants Row]. The YMCU arranged an excursion on the Delaware and Hudson Railroad to Lake George for June 24. Over 200 young Rutlanders made the trip. On Wednesday, July 6, a concert and entertainment was held at the Town Hall. It was a largely attended success.<sup>78</sup>

In 1892 the annual picnic and field day was held at the Rutland Fair Grounds on August 10. All sorts of track and field events were held, as well as a fireman's tournament and a baseball game. A parade through the streets preceded the event. The final score of the baseball game was West Rutland 6, Proctor 1.

On September 21, another excursion was held, this time to Albany. Again about 200 enjoyed the day.<sup>79</sup>

St. Peter's Hall was the scene of a Columbus Day celebration on October 20. A very large audience enjoyed a very interesting evening. A debating club was organized in November. The YMCU dramatic club put on a play for the benefit of the new Rutland Hospital on November 22. This was a financial success.<sup>80</sup> Thus the activities of 1892 finished.

The year of 1893 opened with the election of officers: President, Richard Ryan; Vice-President, J. Kingsley; Recording Secretary, A. P. Hogan; Financial Secretary, Reverend J. M. Brown; and Spiritual Director, Reverend J. M. Brown. At this meeting a series of entertainments were planned for the coming year.<sup>81</sup>

Due to the increased membership, larger rooms were needed, so the rooms adjoining the Broadway quarters in the Sawyer Block on Evelyn Street, were rented. On January 20, the new quarters were dedicated. Both Fathers Gaffney and Brown graced the occasion and added their remarks for the society's continued success.<sup>82</sup>

The Young Men's Catholic Union joined the St. Peter's Hibernian Benevolent Society to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. The affair was held at the Opera House and included a musical entertainment and an illustrated lecture on the Holy Land. It proved to be very successful.<sup>83</sup>

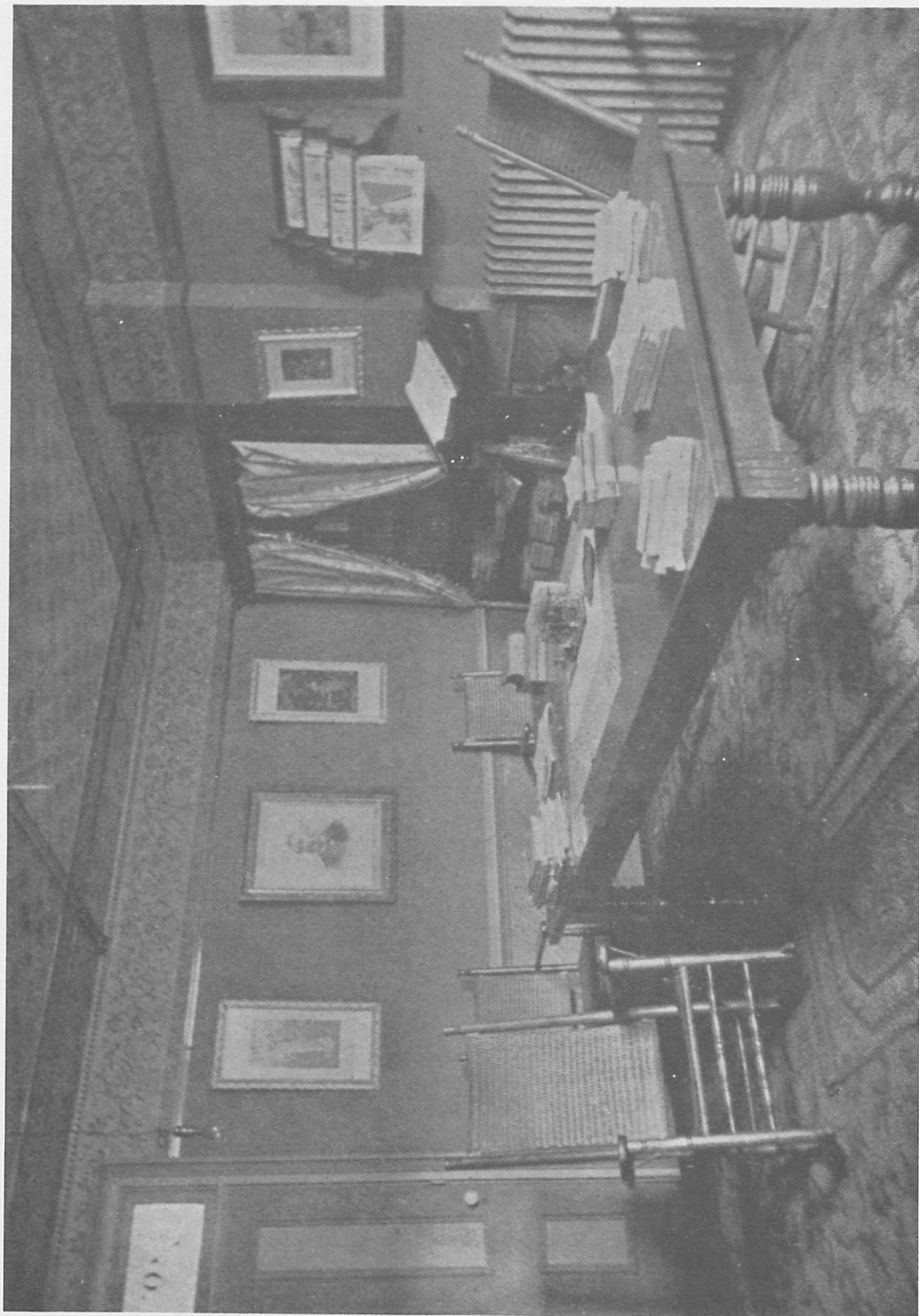
After Easter, a successful dance, attended by 80 couples was held. An entertainment was given on April 26 at the clubrooms. One of the features of this evening





*This is the reception room of the Young Men's Catholic Union in 1893.*





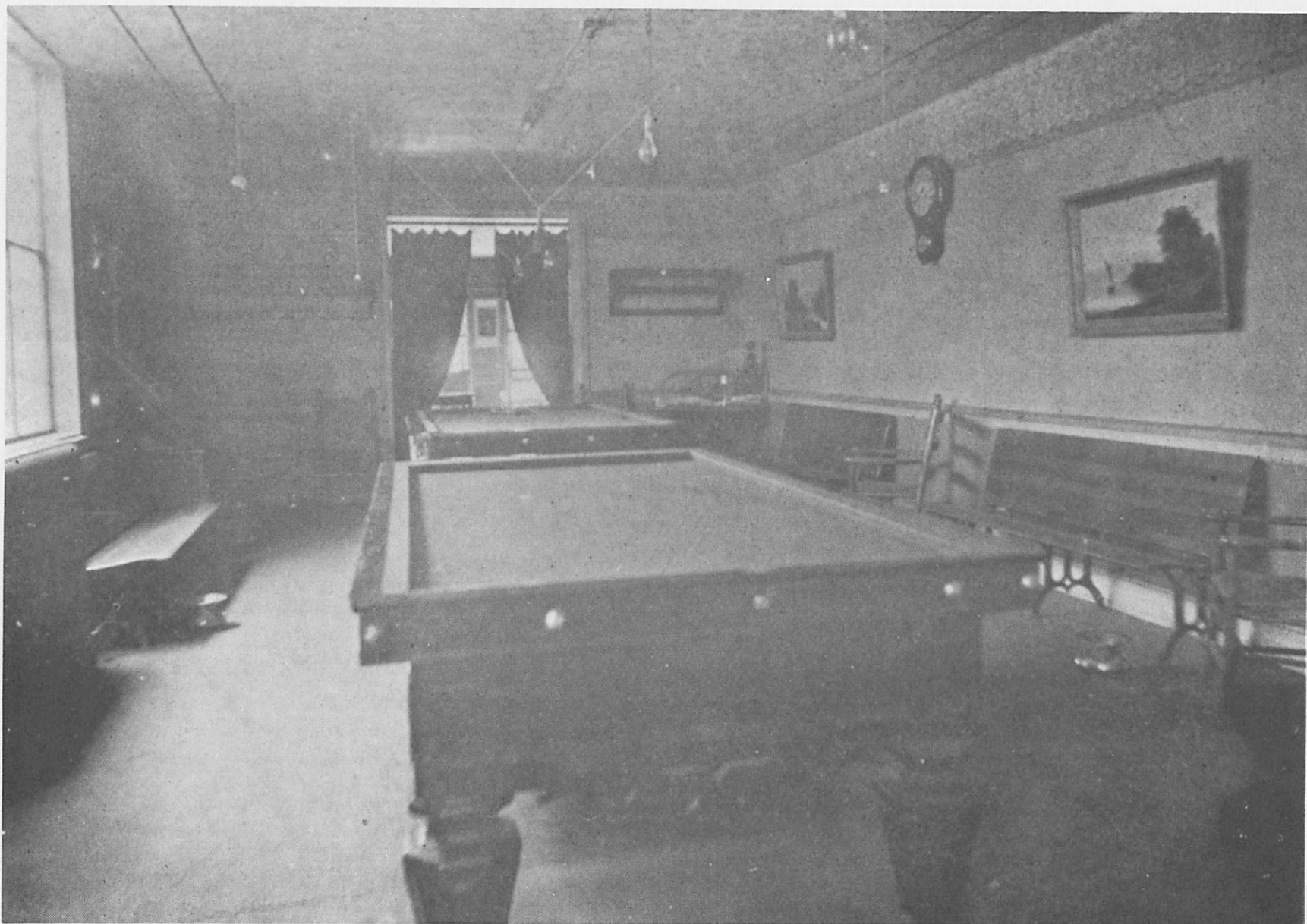
*The Young Men's Catholic Union maintained this reading room in 1893.*





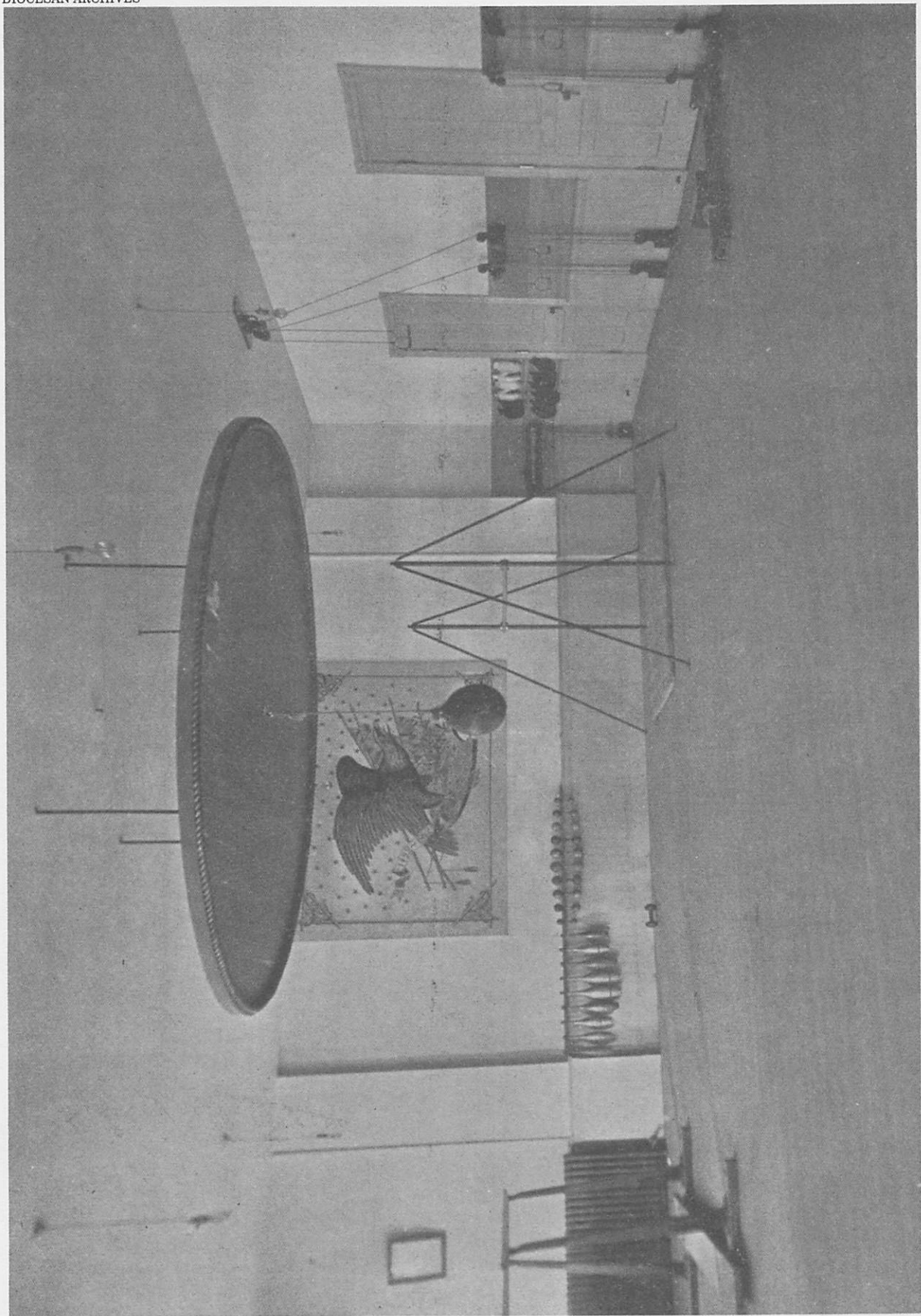
*For those who wished an active entertainment, the Young Men's Catholic Union offered a card room in 1893.*





*For those who wished the challenge of competition, the Young Men's Catholic Union maintained a billiard room in 1893.*





*The gymnasium of the Young Men's Catholic Union in 1893 offered a physical outlet mindful of today's spas.*



was a "calisthenics drill by a class from Mt. St. Joseph Academy," musical selections and refreshments. About 350 people attended.<sup>84</sup>

On Decoration Day, a festival was held at the Union rooms at which Father W. N. Lonergan was the speaker. A Minstrel Show was staged at the Opera House on June 21. In the summer the YMCU Guards, a military drill team, was organized with 45 young men. They drilled twice a week.<sup>85</sup>

Again a baseball team was organized and began its schedule with a game with Fair Haven, which was won by the YMCU, 6 to 2. In July they played the Proctor Town team for the County Championship, but were defeated, 6 to 5. In September, the YMCU team was challenged to a game by the YMCA team. The game was won by the YMCU, 15 to 5.<sup>86</sup>

The Fair Grounds was the location of another field day on August 16. Contestants for the events came from various towns in Vermont and New York State. The local YMCU committee arranged with the railroads to stop at the Fairgrounds to let off those who wished to attend the Field Day.<sup>87</sup>

The events of the afternoon included bicycle races of one, two, five and ten miles. There was also a 36-pound weight toss; a 100 and 200-yard dash; a running high jump; a pole vault; a one-half-mile footrace; a standing broad jump; a running, hop, skip, and jump and a 200-yard hurdle race. In the afternoon there was a baseball game between the local YMCU team and a team composed of college students. A balloon ascension and a parachute drop were the *pièces de résistance*. In the evening there were fireworks from the balloon.

August 16 dawned bright and beautiful. It was perfect weather for the day. The trains arriving in the morning let off their passengers at the Fair Grounds. A picnic lunch was enjoyed. The Rutland Band marched through the streets at 1:00 PM and arrived at the Fair Grounds at 1:30 PM. At 2:00 PM, the program of events began. Some of the times for the events were: one mile bicycle race, 2:05 minutes; 100 yard dash, ten and one-half seconds; running high jump, 5 feet; pole vault, 7 feet. The balloon ascension by Professor Leroux of Paris, France, thrilled the crowd with his parachute jump. The Rutland YMCU baseball team beat a team of collegians by the score of 10 to 4, in a loosely played game. In the evening the large crowd enjoyed the music of the Rutland Band and finally the fireworks fired from the balloons. The trains stopped at the Fair Grounds to pick up their passengers for the return trip home.<sup>88</sup> After all expenses were paid and the prizes awarded to the winners of the field events, the YMCU realized a profit of \$200.00, a princely sum in those days.<sup>89</sup>

On September 27, an excursion to Albany, New York was arranged. The fare was \$1.75 for the round trip. The Delaware and Hudson Railroad train left the Rutland depot at 7:30 AM and arrived in Albany at 10:45 AM. At 7:30 PM, the train left the Albany station for the return trip. Again a large crowd took in this outing.<sup>90</sup>

In October, the YMCU undertook the work of compiling a book of about 60 pages as a Christmas souvenir. The book contained the history and aims of the society.<sup>91</sup>

At Christmastime the YMCU passed out clothing and food to the needy at their rooms from 12:30 to 9:00 PM. A large number of needy persons applied for this help.<sup>92</sup>

For the next several years, the YMCU members enjoyed unprecedented suc-



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cess. In June of 1897, the various units of the Young Men's Catholic Union in the diocese of Burlington, Albany and Ogdensburg held a convention in Rutland and formed a union between the societies of those dioceses to be known as the Champlain Valley Union of the Young Men's Catholic Union.<sup>93</sup>

In April of 1903, the YMCU was still active in Rutland. The eleventh annual bazaar was held at Union Hall. The hall was decorated and booths were set up for selling fancy articles, candy and soft drinks. About \$200.00 worth of prizes were given away. A ticket of 25 cents entitled a person to a chance at one of 25 prizes that ranged in value from \$5.00 to \$15.00. From April 21<sup>st</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup> the Society raised about \$1,000.00 for its treasury. Crowds numbered from 400 to 500 a night.

Gradually this organization began to lose members to other organizations like the Knights of Columbus, Catholic Order of Foresters, and the St. Peter's Athletic Association. In the fall of 1903, the membership in the YMCU had fallen to 50. A membership drive recruited 46 new members.<sup>94</sup> Some new life was instilled into the organization. It was voted to install lockers in the meeting rooms for those interested in athletics. Basketball teams among the members were organized. A pool tournament was organized and did create a lot of interest during the winter months. Two handball teams were also organized, with four men on a team.<sup>95</sup>

By the summer of 1904, the YMCU seems to have ceased operating. For nearly 15 years it had been active in many areas of the parish and helped not only to educate its members, but also to unite them in many ways.

### Sodalities

From all that can be learned, the first grouping of the women of St. Peter's Church took place in the fall of 1864.<sup>96</sup> With plans to build a new St. Peter's Church, it was necessary to raise money for this purpose. Evidently Father Boylan united the women to hold a series of annual fairs in the parish. The first fair was held in the Town Hall from January 30 to February 4, 1865. The group of women was known [in the *Herald* at least] as the Catholic Ladies. For many years this annual fair was held and helped Father Boylan with his building program by raising thousands of dollars.<sup>97</sup>

On Easter Sunday, April 13, 1873, "The Ladies Society" took part in the procession from old St. Peter's to the new church. This ladies society could very well have been the Sodality.

"On June 4, 1871, the May Festival took place at St. Peter's Church, having been unavoidably postponed from last week. At 6:30 PM a procession was formed, consisting of the Father Mathew Total Abstinence Society and the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the latter composed of young misses arrayed in white with tiaras and wreaths of flowers about the head. The procession numbered about 150, and proceeded by the choir of the church, marched through Meadow Street and Forest Street, returning to the church for Vesper Service. The occasion was one of much interest to those participating."<sup>98</sup>

Another mention is made in the *Herald* of June 1, 1874 that, "after Confirmation two new societies were formed, composed of girls of different ages." The May 31, 1875, *Herald* ran this article:



Regular evening services have been held every evening this month at St. Peter's and yesterday these services wound up with the celebration in honor of the Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, by the children of St. Peter's school. A procession formed at the school [the old church] on Meadow Street and went through School Street, Forest Street, South Street, Meadow Street and Mechanic Street [now Convent Avenue] to the church. It was preceded by a cross-bearer and two acolytes; the boys of Father Mathew Total Abstinence Society; the choir of St. Peter's Church, the Sodality of the Holy Infant; the Sodality of the Holy Angels and the Sodality of the Virgin Mary. One hundred and fifty girls and young ladies in white dresses took part in crowning the statue. Bishop DeGoesbriand was present and preached. Father O'Carroll of Fair Haven and O'Reilly of West Rutland were present.

According to the certificate of erection at St. Peter's Rectory, the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary was formed in 1876 and formally erected on January 25, 1878.

Again in the funeral procession at Father Boylan's funeral on December 7, 1886, among those marching to the place of his burial were "120 young ladies of the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary." The *Herald* of May 28, 1883, in its report on the annual May procession at St. Peter's Church, mentions that "the services ended with the reception of a goodly number into the Sodalities." Again on May 28, 1888, the *Herald* notes that "the ladies of the Sodality" took part in the annual May Procession yesterday at 3:00 PM.<sup>99</sup>

After Confirmation in July 1888, "a reception of 25 postulants into the Sodality" took place in the evening. "Each received a medal and ribbon from Father Gaffney."<sup>100</sup>

On February 17, 1890, the Sodality gave an entertainment. On March 4, 1890, the Sodality of St. Peter's Church arranged for a drama after Lent. "On Sunday, May 31, 1891, the annual May Procession was held. Four to five hundred were in the procession from the church at 4:00 PM, headed by Father Gaffney, then the altar boys in red cassocks and white surplices; the school children; the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart; the choir and the young ladies of the Sodality. Several banners were carried. They marched to the new cemetery where Benediction was held. The Sodality presented Father Gaffney with solid silver table ware, thus honoring his 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as a priest."<sup>101</sup>

### Holy Name Society

The national Holy Name Society was organized in 1909 for the purpose of promoting reverence for the devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus. It was anteceded in St. Peter's Parish by some six years. On November 15, 16, and 17, 1903, Father Gaffney obtained the services of a Father McKenna to conduct a three day retreat for the men of the parish with the view of establishing a local branch of the Society.<sup>102</sup> About 500 men made that retreat which presented the reasons for reverence of the name Jesus and also the reasons against cursing, swearing and blasphemy. Father McKenna also encouraged the reception of Holy Communion on the second Sunday of each month by the members.





*Frank Canary was an altar boy at St. Peter's Church at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.*



On Sunday, November 22, 1903, about 300 men met in St. Peter's Church and the Holy Name Society was organized.<sup>103</sup> The following officers were elected: President, James Hogan; Vice-President, John B. Clifford; Recording Secretary, James E. Smith; Financial Secretary, Harry E. Levins; Spiritual Director, Reverend John B. McGarry; Musical Director, Charles McKeough; and Marshall, Edward Welch. Father McGarry was urged to organize a junior branch of the society among the school children of the parish, which he agreed to do.

During that week, Father McGarry visited St. Peter's and St. Mary's Parochial Schools and organized the Junior Holy Name Society among the boys.<sup>104</sup> About 150 boys joined. At St. Peter's School the following officers were chosen: President, Stephen McGuirk; 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President, William Barrett; 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President, John Morse; and Secretary, William Lapan. At St. Mary's School, Thomas Dunn was elected President; Leo McGuirk; Vice-President. Their monthly meetings were held at St. Peter's School Hall.

In the teens and the twenties the men used to sit in a body on the left side aisle and receive Holy Communion together. After Mass, they would remain for a few moments to recite the required prayers and sometimes to hold a short meeting.

Occasionally over the years membership drives would be held to recruit new members. With the coming of Bishop Edward F. Ryan as Ordinary of the diocese, much more emphasis was placed on the Holy Name Society. A former Boston pastor, where giant Holy Name rallies and conventions were a yearly affair, the Bishop wished the men of each parish of the diocese to belong to, and be active in this Society.

Without a doubt, the most successful of parish Holy Name Societies was the one at St. Peter's. This was due in a large part to the appointment of the Reverend Gerald T. Buckley, an assistant pastor at St. Peter's, to be the Spiritual Director of the Society.<sup>105</sup>

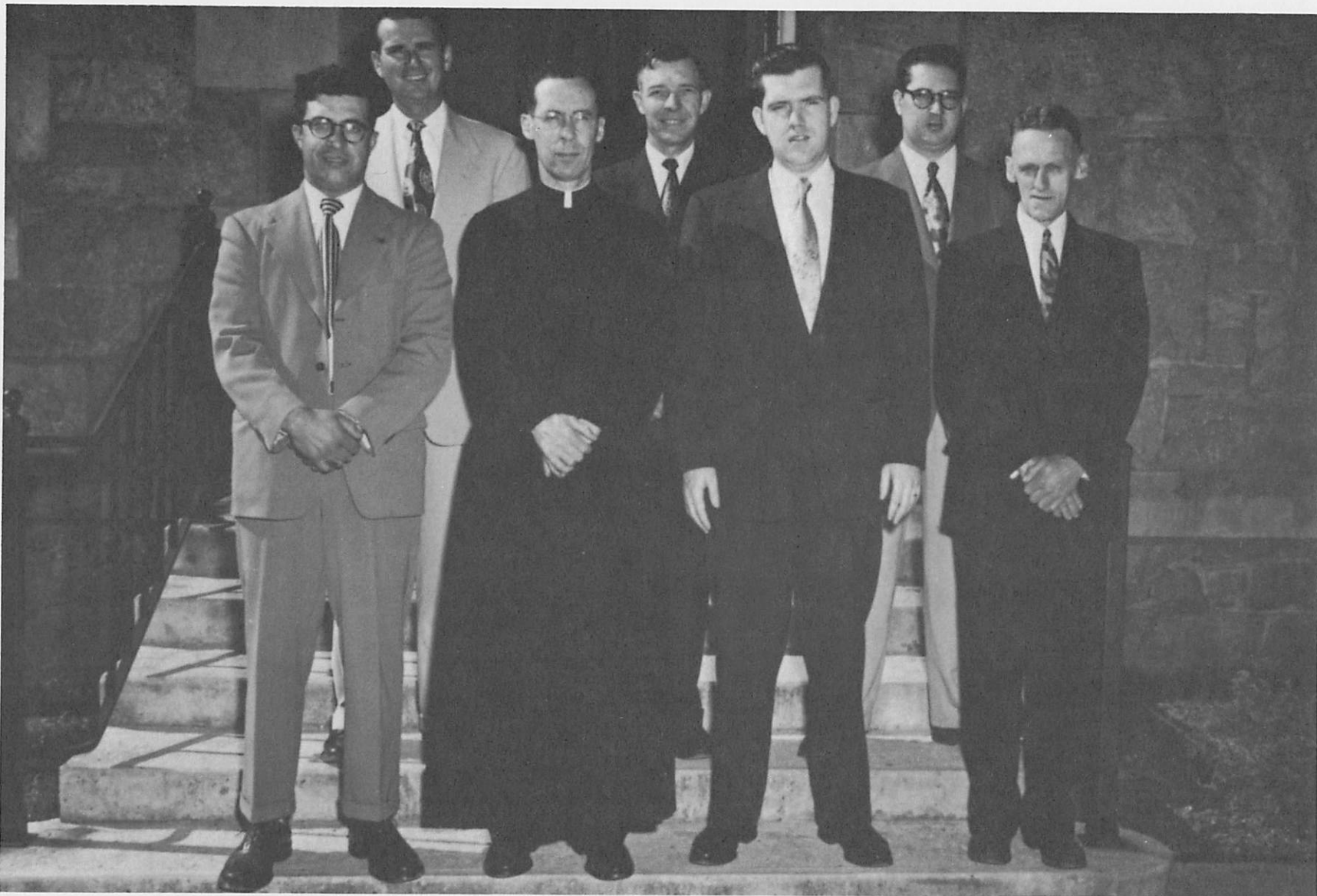
In January 1948, at a meeting with a handful of men, plans were made for a membership campaign. Facing Father Buckley and his small band of men was the job of making a program that would be attractive to all the men, young and old. Many men felt that this was "just another revival" of the organization. This feeling presented a major problem.

The project was organized on the basis that the society promoted a spiritual and physical betterment of every man in the parish. Figures showed that the first membership drive brought out only 157 men; later that year a second drive swelled the total to 400. The second year drive increased the number of members to 600, and the third to 770.

Working with Father Buckley were the following presidents: 1948, Jack Hall; 1949, William Medlin; 1950, Robert Reardon and 1951, Myles Pratico. These men, with the other officers and the advisory board shaped the policies of the Holy Name Society at St. Peter's. The yearly schedule was an active one, spiritually and socially. The year opened with a Mass on their regular Communion Sunday in January. The first meeting of the year was held on the first Monday in January. It consisted of a discussion of business and a short talk by the spiritual director, the showing of a Catholic movie and refreshments.

In January the men of the parish were canvassed to secure new members and





*The officers of the Holy Name Society standing on the steps are: 1<sup>st</sup> row (l to r) Frank Caggige, Vice-President; Reverend Gerald T. Buckley, Spiritual Director; Richard Reardon, President; Richard Fleming, Marshall and 2<sup>nd</sup> row (l to r) Michael Rutkowski, Marshall; Walter Manley, Treasurer; and James Carroll, Secretary.*



to collect the one dollar dues. In February the St. Peter's Boy Scouts were invited to join the men of the society in receiving Holy Communion. During February, which was Catholic Press Month, the men sent out pamphlets to every family in the parish. In three years this amounted to more than 5,000 pamphlets. A Communion breakfast followed in March, at which well-known priests were the guest speakers. The election of officers took place in May and plans were made to attend the State Rally. At the May Communion Breakfast, the members of the Senior class at Mt. St. Joseph Academy were guests and officially received into the society and presented with their pins.

In June, after the Communion Mass, the new officers were installed. The next social meeting was held in October, when plans were made for the annual banquet in November. At the November banquet it was arranged to have nationally known sports figures as speakers. The football squads and coaches of Mt. St. Joseph Academy and Rutland High School were guests of the Holy Name men. A feature at this banquet was the awarding of the Monsignor Brown Memorial Trophy for sportsmanship to a participant in the annual city championship game held November 11.

In December the society played host to the St. Peter's Altar Boys at a Christmas party. A High Mass was offered for all the members of the Society serving in the armed forces of the country. In 1951 there were over 50 serving in the armed forces. High Mass was also offered for every deceased member shortly after his death. An Annual High Mass was also offered for all deceased members during the month of November.

The society disbursed nearly \$800.00 a year for charitable causes. The group sponsored a Junior Holy Name basketball team, which was state champion twice in three years. The Holy Name Society planned a definite monthly schedule for some 100 Junior Holy Name members in the local high schools.

A change in personnel and the changes in American society gradually brought about a decline in membership in this Society. Other interests and activities took up the time of the men and slowly it reduced its activities and became once again, a spiritual society.

### St. Peter's Athletic Association

Back in the early 1900's and even before the turn of the century, many of the boys and some of the girls left school at about the sixth grade level in order to get a job to help support their families. It was not unusual to hear of 13, 14 or 15-year-old boys going to work in the factories and shops for \$2.00 or \$3.00 a week. That was the usual pay for boys of this age. [There were nine grades in grammar school in those days]. A lot of the boys at St. Peter's School never went to high school.

In the evenings they used to get together to play baseball or football on some vacant lot as long as there was light enough to see the ball. In the winter months, they used to gather at Moloney's barn on Columbian Avenue to practice basketball.

While he was a curate at St. Peter's, the Reverend John B. McGarry took an interest in the boys and evidently organized some of the teams, which developed into the St. Peter's Athletic Association. These teams were very likely composed of boys who were still in St. Peter's School, perhaps even those attending the commercial course, as well as some who had left school.





*The St. Peter's Baseball Club from the 1905 era included: front row (l to r) George Maroney, Francis Barrett, John (Jack) Maloney, Frank Canary and John Barrett; back row (l to r) Jim (Jiggs) Foster, Pat Howley, Bill Bruton, Walter (Beenie) O'Brien and Henry (Corny) Crowley.*



On July 6, 1907, an item in the *Rutland Herald* reported that the "St. Peter's Baseball Team and the Marble City Juniors will play the Proctor Young Men's Christian Association on Warner's lot."

In those days there was no St. Peter's Field, so the boys practiced or played on the "Baxter" lot, in the city park, or on Green's Hill [just west of the present General Electric Plant, across the tracks from the foot of Cramton Avenue and now leveled.]

On February 28, 1908, the boys of the Athletic Association put on a minstrel show to raise money to buy baseball uniforms and equipment.<sup>106</sup> Needless to say the hall [St. Peter's] was packed with spectators. Five hundred tickets had been issued. The *Herald* stated that it was "one of the most successful amateur performances seen in this city in a long time." The boys had rehearsed for a month previously under the direction of Mrs. T. W. Moloney.

In addition to a chorus of 25 voices, the interlocutor was Andy Ducharme; the end men were Charles J. Burke and John P. Hanley; the ballad singers were Francis G. Barrett, John J. Barrett, Jr., Ray Carroll, John Murphy and John Reynolds. Miss Mary Collins presided at the piano. Miss Charlotte Moloney and Edward Copps were the violinists. There were two performances, one at 3:00 PM for the school children, and another at 8:15 PM for the adults.

The same boys put on another Minstrel Show after Lent for the benefit of Holy Innocents Church, this time at the Opera House.<sup>107</sup>

After a summer of baseball, the St. Peter's Athletic Association fielded a football team. The team was composed of: Moriarity, Center; Traverse and Franzoni, Right Guard; Columb and Howard, Left Guard; Howard, Right Tackle; Keeley, Left Tackle; Tighe, Right End; W. Barrett, Right End and Left Half Back; Crowley, Left End; A. H. Catozzi, Left Guard and Left End; F. Barrett, Quarterback; J. Barrett, Right Half Back; F. Catozzi, Left Half Back; and A.C. Catozzi, Full Back.<sup>108</sup>

The team practiced on Baxter's lot or at the Main Street Park. They played Burr and Burton of Manchester in a 6 to 6 tie; and they lost to Troy Conference Academy at Poultney, 5 to 0. They defeated Middlebury High School at Baxter's lot by the score of 22 to 6.

The *Herald* reported that "the St. Peter's Athletic Association clubrooms opened at 194½ Columbian Avenue last evening. The members gave a reception for their parents and friends. An informal musical program of piano and vocal selections was the feature of the evening. About 60 people were present."<sup>109</sup> [The Thomas W. Moloney residence was at 194 Columbian Avenue].

From the memory of those who took part in the Athletic Association, as well as from the *Rutland Herald*, the Athletic Association not only met regularly and had officers, but also had an annual banquet at the Bardwell Hotel.

The officers for 1912 were: George M. Clifford, President; F.C. Barrett, Vice-President; John Murphy, Financial Secretary; C. N. Grimes, Recording Secretary; George T. Moroney, Baseball Manager.<sup>110</sup> High school athletics were not as highly organized in those days as they are today. One item in the *Herald* mentioned that Rutland High School planned to organize a basketball team.<sup>111</sup> St. Peter's Athletic Association arranged games with high school teams, town teams and even with college teams in baseball and football and from 1915 on, in basketball.



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Until 1915, baseball and football games, as well as practice sessions, were held at Baxter's lot, the Main Street Park or on Green's Hill. In the Spring of 1915, the present St. Peter's Field began to be used. At this time, the Sisters of St. Joseph owned the property. Permission to use the field had to be obtained from the sisters. A baseball diamond, a football field, a quarter-mile track and tennis courts were all laid out. Older men in the parish remember going down to the complex to work on the various fields. One told of the young men working at laying out the track, bringing in cinders and rolling them for the track.

The Sisters of St. Joseph had acquired this property from the estate of the late Reverend Thomas A. Gaffney on April 24, 1908,<sup>112</sup> He had originally bought the property from Annie E. Pierpoint for \$1,000.00 on March 14, 1901.<sup>113</sup> It contained four and a half acres.

At a meeting on Sunday, May 2, 1915, the members of the track and baseball teams of the St. Peter's Athletic Association discussed the matter of buying baseball and track uniforms. To finance the expense thus to be entailed, it was decided to put on a minstrel show at St. Peter's Hall. The amount realized would also be used for the purpose of equipping the new athletic field.<sup>114</sup> The *Herald* noted that "the diamond is in good shape and the new grandstand, seating 600, has been completed."<sup>115</sup>

In the spring of 1916, more work was done on the field under the supervision of the Reverend John M. Brown. The diamond especially received treatment, making it perfectly level.<sup>116</sup> In April 1917, manager John Barrett announced that "St. Peter's Field is open for the use of any fraternal organization who wishes to drill there, or to use it for baseball practice."<sup>117</sup>

In the parish report of 1916 there was an item listed for repairs on the athletic field for \$709.60. In the report of 1917, an item was listed for repairs on the athletic field for \$190.00. This same year the purchase of the athletic field was listed for \$2,450.00.<sup>118</sup> The land records list the sale as follows: "That the Sisters of St. Joseph Society for the consideration of \$2,000.00 sold to the Reverend J. M. Brown, the agent of the Roman Catholic Diocese, the premises known as St. Peter's Athletic Field on June 20, 1917."<sup>119</sup>

The following assistant pastors at St. Peter's Church were prominently mentioned as being a big "push" behind this organization: the Reverend Edward J. Howard; the Reverend Thomas E. McMahon and the Reverend Peter C. Nolin, stationed at St. Peter's from 1914 to 1919. [Father McMahon entered the service during World War I, serving as a chaplain.] Mr. Peter F. McManus for several years was the supervisor of athletics at St. Peter's. It was under his supervision that St. Peter's Field was laid out.<sup>120</sup>

This organization lasted through the summer of 1919. After that there is no further mention of the St. Peter's Athletic Association.

### St. Peter's Athletic Association Cadets

"The members of the St. Peter's Athletic Association intend to be prepared for military service if they should be called upon and to this end they are drilling regularly under the instruction of Private C. M. Watkins of the United States Regular Army recruiting station in this



city. A drill will be held tonight and from this time on probably once a week, at least, the boys will spend an hour, fitting themselves for Uncle Sam's work. Thirty-two are already enrolled for the practice drills and it is expected that there will be more tonight.

Most of the members of the Association are under what is likely to be the conscription age limit, so such a law would not affect them, should it be passed, for some time to come. A few of the members are over 21, but most of them are from 17 to 18 years of age."<sup>121</sup>

## Baseball

The beginning of baseball with a team from St. Peter's was in the year 1907. "St. Peter's Baseball Team and the Marble City Juniors will play on Baxter's lot today"<sup>122</sup> No mention of other games was found for that year, but, no doubt there were some played. On February 28, 1908, St. Peter's Athletic Association gave a minstrel show at St. Peter's Hall for the benefit of the baseball team. That spring a full schedule of games was played against high school teams and various town teams.<sup>123</sup>

In 1909, a team was fielded made up of the following players: Moroney, Left Field; F. Barrett, 1<sup>st</sup> Base; O'Brien 2<sup>nd</sup> Base; John Barrett, Shortstop; Fox, Catcher; A. Catozzi, 3<sup>rd</sup> Base; F. Catozzi, Right Field; Moloney, Center Field; Elsworth, Pitcher.<sup>124</sup> Among the teams they played were Black River Academy of Ludlow; Troy Conference Academy of Poultney; Wallingford High School; Middlebury High School; and Fair Haven High School.<sup>125</sup>

In 1910, the team was composed of Francis Barrett, 1<sup>st</sup> Base; W. Navin, 3<sup>rd</sup> Base; O'Brien, 2<sup>nd</sup> Base; J. Barrett, Shortstop; Moroney, Left Field; F. Catozzi, Pitcher; Carroll, Right Field; C. Maloney, Center Field; and A. Catozzi, Catcher.<sup>126</sup> The schedule included the following games and scores: St. Peter's AA, 12, Middlebury College Second Team, 0; St. Peter's AA, 11, T.C.A., 10; St. Peter's AA, 5, Black River Academy, 0; St. Peter's AA, 13, Vergennes High School, 0; St. Peter's AA, 9, Fair Haven Town team, 0; St. Peter's AA, 0, St. Michael's College, 4; St. Peter's AA, 5, Pittsford Town team, 6.<sup>127</sup>

These teams continued in the seasons that followed. Many of the same teams were on the St. Peter's Athletic Association schedule. In 1915, St. Peter's Field was opened. The St. Peter's Athletic Association began to use this field in the spring of 1915. A grandstand was built and an expanded schedule began that year. The St. Peter's Athletic Association played not only in the spring, but also throughout the summer and into the fall.

Not only did they play the usual spring schedule of high school teams, college teams, and town teams, a schedule of about 20 games, but the Fraternity or Fraternal League was also begun during the summer months. When the season ended on October 17, 1915, St. Peter's Athletic Association ended up with a 14-2 record, winning a silver cup as the league champions.<sup>128</sup> The team was composed of E. Taveralli, 3<sup>rd</sup> Base; Mooney, 2<sup>nd</sup> Base; Faloon, Catcher; W. Clifford, 1<sup>st</sup> Base; Sullivan, Shortstop; ("Skeeter") Moroney, Left Field; Garrow, Right Field; S. McDevitt, Center Field; H. Hulihan, Pitcher; Daley Pitcher; Bertanni and Borah, Catchers.

In all, this team played a total of about 40 games. The Fraternal League was



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composed of the St. Peter's Athletic Association, the Center Rutland Athletic Club, the Eagles, Grotto, the French Athletic Club, the Moose, the K of C and Company A, 172 Infantry.

In 1916 the team opened its season on April 29, 1916, losing to Middlebury College Second Team, 12-6. It then went on a winning streak until that was broken on May 30, by Rutland High School, 8-7, before 600 fans. This defeat was later avenged when the St. Peter's Athletic Association defeated Rutland High School 4-3 on June 12, 1916, and 9-2 on June 24, 1916.

In the summer the St. Peter's Athletic Association began play in the Fraternal League. The league was made up of the St. Peter's Athletic Association, the Alhambra [that is, K of C], Grotto, the Moose, and the Eagles. St. Peter's again won the league championship, at one point being 7-2 in league competition. This team was made up of E. Taveralli, 3<sup>rd</sup> Base; Mooney, 2<sup>nd</sup> Base; A. Dolphin, Right Field; Moriarity, Left Field; W. Clifford, 1<sup>st</sup> Base; F. Terenzini, Catcher; S. McDevitt, Center Field; Sullivan, Shortstop; H. Hulihan, Pitcher; R. Terenzini, 3<sup>rd</sup> Base; W. Navin, 2<sup>nd</sup> Base; Doxey and Barrett, Catchers.

In 1917, the St. Peter's Athletic Association schedule included the Middlebury College Second Team which they beat 12-0. On April 29, they were scheduled to play the West Rutland Independents; on May 5 Goddard Seminary; on May 8, St. Michael's College; on May 12, UVM's Second Team. May 18 was open but on May 19 and 20 St. Anselm's College was scheduled. The schedule included the Barre Athletic Club on May 27; Rutland High on May 30; Hudson Falls, NY on June 2 and 3; UVM's Second Team on June 9; Italian A.C. on June 10; Goddard Seminary of Barre on June 22; and the Italian A.C. of Barre on June 23.

That summer they also engaged in games with town teams in the area as well as teams from outside the state. A long and successful schedule, was enjoyed by hundreds of baseball fans in the area. Several times they played before crowds of over 1,000.

This team had as members: Barrett, Left Field; W. Navin, Right Field; G. Walsh 2<sup>nd</sup> Base; R. Terenzini, 3<sup>rd</sup> Base; E. Taveralli, Center Field; Holcombe, Shortstop; A. Dolphin, Catcher; Cram, Pitcher; and W. Clifford 1<sup>st</sup> Base.

In 1918 and 1919, this team continued to play the best competition that they could find both in the state of Vermont, as well as travelling teams from other sections of the country. Evidently the St. Peter's Athletic Association baseball team continued until the formation of the Interstate Industrial League which was composed of Newport and Claremont in New Hampshire, and Rutland, Windsor, Bellows Falls and Springfield in Vermont. The Rutland entry was made up of former St. Peter's Athletic Association members. At the end of the season, on October 5, 1919, they played the Boston Red Sox, who were barnstorming after the big league season was over, at the Fair Grounds. The Red Sox won the game, 6-2. "Babe" Ruth hit a home run in the eighth inning.

These teams produced many fine players. A few of them even went on to play with professional baseball teams. Holcombe and Walsh played in the Eastern League and Harry "Ike" Hulihan signed, in 1920, with the Philadelphia Athletics, and was on the roster of first the Giants and then the Braves.



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The range of teams played and the success of the St. Peter's team was well illustrated in the following records and scores:

St. Peter's AA	- 3	St. Mary's Alumni of Glens Falls, N.Y.	- 1
"	- 1	Windsor	- 6
"	- 4	Forestdale	- 6
"	- 6	Barre All Stars	- 1
"	- 4	West Rutland	- 1
"	- 4	U. S. Signal Corps	- 3
"	- 0	"	- 11
"	- 7	Proctor	- 8
"	- 3	Ludlow	- 6
"	- 1	Burlington Independents	- 5
"	- 1	Bellows Falls	- 3
"	- 5	Watervliet, N.Y.	- 2
"	- 4	Woodstock	- 2
"	- 5	Pittsford	- 3
"	- 8	Danby	- 4
"	- 8	Claremont, N.H.	- 7
"	- 5	Whitehall, N.Y.	- 0
"	- 3	Glens Falls, N.Y.	- 1
"	- 5	Western Electric of Boston, Mass.	- 3
"	- 7	St. Anselm's College	- 4
"	-14	"	- 9

### Football

The success of the St. Peter's Athletic Association baseball teams seemed to carry over to the football teams. The first note of a football team was in the fall of 1907, when the *Herald* reported that a game would be played between "St. Peter's Parochial School and the Proctor Y.M.C.A. on Warner's lot" in Proctor.<sup>129</sup>

The next fall [1908] the St. Peter's Athletic Association fielded another football team. Among other teams, it played Burr and Burton Seminary of Manchester; Troy Conference Academy of Poultney [then a prep school, but now Green Mountain College]; and Middlebury High School. The team lost only to Troy Conference Academy by a 5-0 score.

The team was made up of Moriarity, Center; Traverse and Franzoni, Right Guards; Columb, Left Guard; Howard, Right Tackle and Left Guard; Kelley, Left Tackle; Tighe, Right End; W. Barrett, Right End and Left Half Back; Crowley, Left End; A. H. Catozzi, Left Guard and Left End; Francis Barrett, Quarterback; John Barrett, Right Half Back; F. Catozzi, Left Half Back; A.C. Catozzi, Full Back.

In 1909, a schedule of six games was played. The St. Peter's Athletic Association defeated the Troy Conference Academy (11-0); Vergennes High School (28-0); the West Rutland Independents (29-0); Middlebury College Second Team (47-0) and the Bennington Athletic Association (11-0), and tied St. Michael's College (6-6).

The team was composed of almost all of the 1908 team with the exception of the following new players: Collins at Right Tackle; Murphy at Right Guard; McGarry at



Left Guard; and Moore at Left End. The schedule began on October 11 and ended November 22.

The 1910 team was made up of Wm. Tighe, Left End; Dugan, Left Tackle; Carroll, Left Guard; Rice, Center; Carroll and Howard Right Guards; McGarrity, Right Tackle; O'Brien, Right End; F. Barrett, Quarterback; J. Barrett, Right Half Back; W. Navin, Left Half Back; and Moriarity, Full Back. The team defeated Troy Conference Academy (11-6), Bennington (6-0); Vergennes Town Team (12-0) and lost to the Vergennes Town Team (7-5) in a snowstorm on November 14.

Through 1911, 1912, 1913 and 1914, they continued playing the same teams with equal success. In 1915 the team was composed of Capeless, Right End; Ghio and Tree, Right Tackles; Dyer and Welch, Right Guards; Morgan, Center; Hurley, Gleason and Clark, Left Guards; McDevitt, Sullivan, and Morrissey, Left Tackles; Capeless, Left End; Daly Quarterback; Barrett, Right Half Back; Taveralli, Left Half Back; and McDevitt, Full Back. They attempted a more ambitious schedule. Although outweighed on the line, they played the Dartmouth College Freshman team, losing 32-0. They also lost twice to the St. Michael's College team (6-0) and (10-0). They defeated the Rutland Independents (40-0) and the Bellows Falls Athletic Club (24-0). They ended the season by beating the Scrubs [composed mostly of Rutland High School football team members] 48-6 on November 28, 1915. The coaches were A. Dolphin and P.F. McManus.

In succeeding years the St. Peter's football team played the best competition it could find. In one season they defeated St. Michael's College (18-0); Middlebury College Second Team (15-0); Goddard Seminary of Barre (20-0); St. Michael's College (20-10); Goddard Seminary (12-7); the All Stars (27-6) and lost to Goddard Seminary (7-0). The team's ends were Sullivan (145 lbs.) Kelly (150 lbs.), McDevitt (155 lbs.), and Cocklin (147 lbs.). The tackles were Rudin (185 lbs.), Hutchins (185 lbs.), Clarke (155 lbs.), Cummings (135 lbs.), and Raleigh (155 lbs.). The guards were Fox (152 lbs.), Gleason (165 lbs.), and Bradshaw (185 lbs.). The centers, were Mylott (135 lbs.), Morrissey (210 lbs.), Capeless (165 lbs.), and Dorian (142 lbs.). The quarterbacks were Doxey (133 lbs.) and Shea (130 lbs.). The halfbacks were Taveralli (155 lbs.), Lehr (149 lbs.), Cannon (152 lbs.), Barrett (175 lbs.), and Hulihan (138 lbs.). The full backs were Stockwell (180 lbs.) and Tree (148 lbs.).

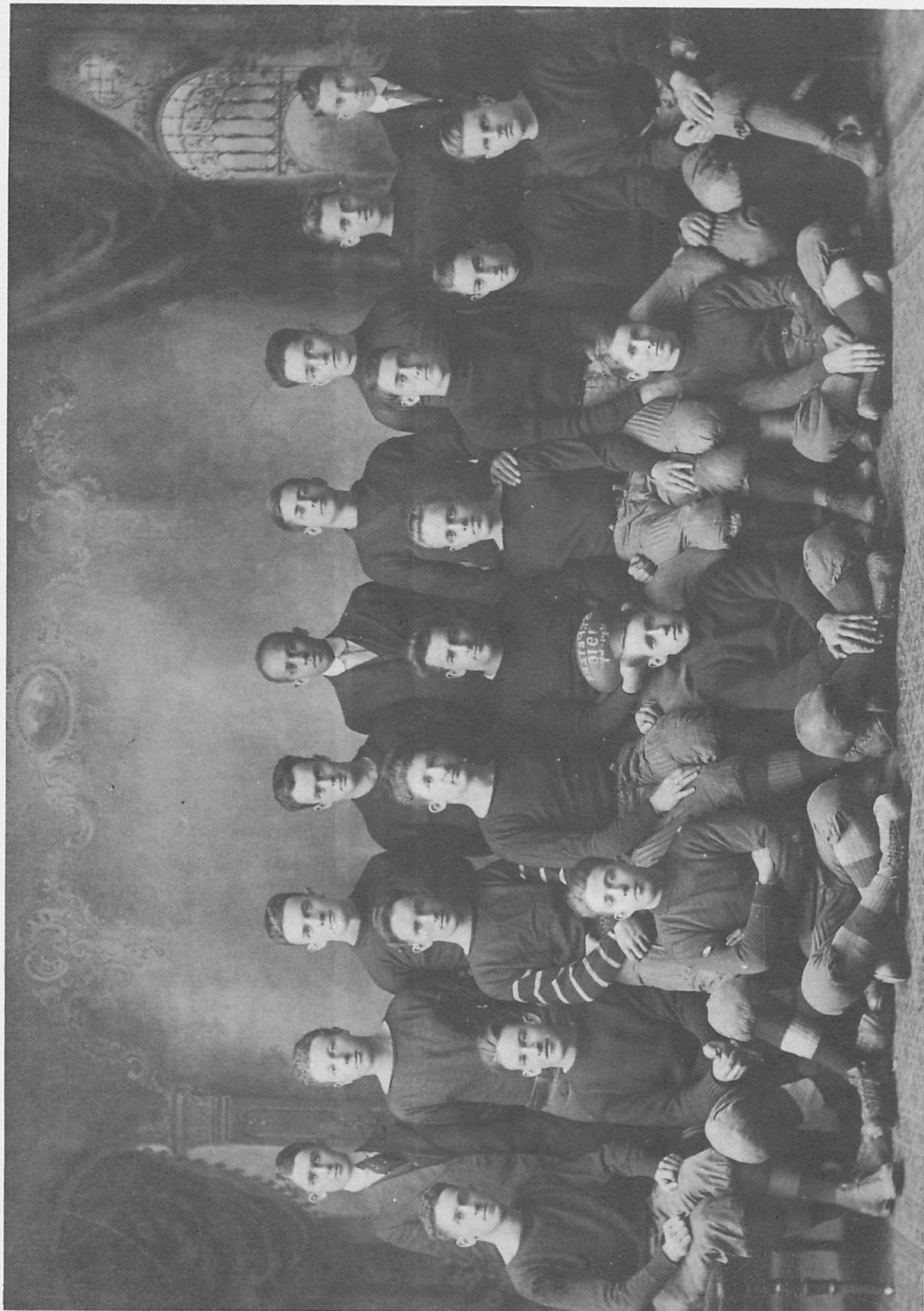
With Tony Dolphin as coach, the team in succeeding years was equally as good and played equally ambitious schedules. The ends were Dubuc and Daley, tackles were Jim Hanley and Morgliani, guards were Art Sullivan, James Creed, J. Sullivan, Cummings and McDevitt. The center was Raleigh and the backs were Sullivan, Holcombe and Dion. For years after 1919, whenever any of these former players got together, the subject of conversation would be the great games they played.

### Basketball

St. Peter's Athletic Association fielded a basketball team in the winter of 1915. Harry "Ike" Hulihan, Rice, Clifford, Capt. Hurley, Capeless, Giliali, Daley, Gleason and Hanley made up the first squad ever to take the floor at St. Peter's Hall.<sup>130</sup>

Among their opponents were the West Rutland Independents, Fair Haven High School, Burr and Burton Seminary of Manchester and the Manchester Athletic Club.





*This photograph of the St. Peter's Football Team in 1916 does not give the names of those in the picture.*



The 1915-16 team of F. Barrett, R. Capeless, Giliali, Ricci, Navin, Taveralli, McDevitt, J. Barrett, Elsworth, Hurley, Gleason, Tree, Ghio, and Brown played a longer and tougher schedule arranged by Manager James "Smiles" Barrett [the only man who sits in a chair while playing pool.] During the 1915-16 season the team lost to St. Michael's College (29-11), defeated Company E, Second Team of Bellows Falls (56-21), defeated Shoreham All Stars (24-15), lost to Company E, Vermont National Guard of Bellows Falls (39-17), lost again to St. Michaels College (59-17), then defeated the K of C of Bellows Falls (27-11), lost to the Rutland Athletic Club, (46-20), lost to Rutland High School (22-20), lost again to St. Michael's College (35-22) and defeated Company M of Bellows Falls (84-14). They defeated Company A (26-24) and the Fair Haven Lightning Five (41-29) and lost again to the All Collegians (29-16).

With Carroll, at left forward; Barrett at right forward; Capeless and Watkins at center; Hanley and McDevitt at right guard; and Daley at left guard; the 1917 team with James Barrett as manager, won 8 and lost 4 games. Perhaps the most notable game was a 5-4 win over St. Michael's College in St. Peter's Hall.

With practically the same team back in 1918, St. Peter's Athletic Association played another good schedule, winning their share of the games.

### Track

In 1915, the track team became a reality. In its first dual meet, it defeated the Rutland High School track team by the score of 68 1/3 to 53 2/3 before a crowd of 400 on St. Peter's Field. F. Capeless won the 100-yard dash in 11.5 seconds. C. Murphy and J. Deloges finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in the pole vault. In the 880-yard dash Burke finished 3<sup>rd</sup>. In the running high jump, C. Murphy was 1<sup>st</sup> with a 5-foot-4-inch jump. The 2-mile run saw Burke and Raleigh finish 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. F. Capeless won the 440-yard dash. C. Murphy and R. Cocklin finished one and two in the broad jump, going 17 feet 4 1/2 inches. The 120-yard low hurdles saw F. Capeless and R. Cocklin finish 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. The mile run found B. Hurley and Burke in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> spot. The 12 pound shot put, saw St. Peter's finish 1-2-3; C. Murphy, M. McDevitt and R. Capeless, in that order. The distance was 33 feet 5 inches. The mile relay was run by Catozzi, Everion, R. Capeless and F. Capeless who finished 2<sup>nd</sup> to Rutland High school in the time of 3 minutes and 20 seconds.

These men and others entered several other meets in the next three years and pulled down their share of honors. One year the St. Peter's relay team was undefeated in state competition. For two successive years they took part in a benefit for the Church of the Holy Innocents.

### Other Sports

For some years the St. Peter's Athletic Association sponsored a team in the bowling league in the city. A girls' basketball team, composed of Agnes Murphy, Helen Reagan, Nan Moloney, Katherine Raleigh, Agnes Hurley, Anna Callahan and Agnes Walsh played at least one season.

In 1915, when St. Peter's Field was laid out, it included on the east side three tennis courts. In 1916, more courts were laid out and there was some talk of a tennis tournament.<sup>131</sup>



### St. Peter's Cadet Corps

Not to be outdone by the members of the St. Peter's Athletic Association who had formed a corps of cadets in the spring of 1917, [after war was declared], the boys in the upper grades at St. Peter's School also formed a cadet corps.

Their drillmaster was Mr. Harold Radigan, a recent Norwich University graduate. Under his tutelage they learned the manual of arms and the marching formations. They took part in many of the local parades. This lasted for three or four years.

In 1924 or 1925, this organization was revived at St. Peter's School. The boys of the upper grades drilled in St. Peter's Hall during the winter months. George Regan, a sergeant in Company A, Vermont National Guard, was in charge, assisted by Martin Kelly. The old wooden guns, belonging to the former unit, were used to learn the manual of arms and the formations for marching. The old cadet uniforms of blue-gray with black edging and caps were fitted to the new cadets. These boys also marched proudly in local parades.

This unit went camping at Neshobe Beach, on Lake Bomoseen, during the summer of 1926. This 10-day camp was used to drill in the morning and the afternoon was left free for games and swimming. Some evenings there was a campfire. During the first night no one got to sleep in the pup tents very early. Skunks were wandering through the area. The rest of the nights, skunks or no skunks everyone was ready to turn in after taps and night prayers.

On Sunday the cadets in full uniform attended Mass at St. Mary of the Lake Chapel at Lake Bomoseen. They marched in formation to the church for Mass. After Mass they went through their drills, on the grounds opposite the church, for the people who had been at Mass.

They took part in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade in Fair Haven, proudly displaying their skills in marching, and drew many compliments. The life of this cadet corps was only a few years.

### St. Peter's Boy Scouts

In the fall of 1939, Bishop Matthew F. Brady gave his permission for Boy Scout troops to be formed in the Diocese of Burlington. The Reverend Thomas H. Connor, then a curate at St. Peter's, was appointed by the bishop as the first diocesan Scout chaplain.

A troop was formed among the boys of St. Peter's and early in 1940, they were inducted formally into the Boy Scouts by a contingent of the newly formed troop of the Cathedral Parish of Burlington.

Following this formal induction at St. Peter's Church, and Benediction, a supper was put on in the old cafeteria at Mt. St. Joseph Academy for the new inductees and the visiting troops from the Cathedral Parish. The adult members of both units, as well as their priests, were guests at this affair.

### Legion of Mary

In the fall of 1955 at the invitation of Father Joyce, a group of Legionnaires from Boston addressed a gathering at St. Peter's School. The purpose of the meeting was to explain what the Legion of Mary was, its origin, its aim and how it could be an



asset to a parish.

On November 1, 1955, a group of Legionnaires from Whitehall, N.Y., came to Rutland to help organize a parish group of the Legion of Mary in St. Peter's Parish. Five men and nine women attended this organizational meeting. Officers were appointed and the Legion of Mary under the title of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, with Father John Reedy as its Spiritual Director, became a reality.

The Legion of Mary is an organization of Catholic men and women who offer their services to their pastor to aid in performing spiritual works in the parish. This is done under the banner of Mary whose help is sought by the Legionnaires to carry out their duties.

Active membership entails a weekly meeting and obligations to perform two hours of apostolic work. The works of the Legion include: visits to the sick in hospitals, nursing homes and in their own homes; visits to extend sympathy and consolation where there has been a death in the family; visits to welcome new families into the parish, and visits to encourage those who have become indifferent or lax, to return to the practice of their faith. To sum up the work of the Legion, it is anything deemed helpful to the parish.

<sup>1</sup> *Rutland Herald*, March 21, 1868

<sup>2</sup> Rules of St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Benevolent Society of West Rutland

<sup>3</sup> The booklet containing the constitution and by-laws of this society may be found in the Vermont Historical Society Library, Montpelier, Vermont, and a photocopy of it is in the Chancery Office Archives among the notes connected with St. Bridget's Parish, West Rutland.

<sup>4</sup> *Rutland Herald*, October 6, 1870

<sup>5</sup> *Rutland County Independent*, November 11, 1871

<sup>6</sup> *Rutland Herald*, July 19, 1871; July 4, 1872; July 6, 1872; July 6, 1877; July 7, 1879; July 5, 1881 and June 27, 1882

<sup>7</sup> *Rutland County Independent*, July 22, 1871 and June 22, 1872

<sup>8</sup> *Rutland Herald*, April 13, 1873

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, June 30, 1873

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, March 12, 13, 14 and 23, 1877

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, March 18, 1878

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, January 31, 1887

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, January 29, 1889

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, November 21, 23, 1891

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, November 14, 1891

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, January 31, 1891

<sup>17</sup> *Rutland Herald*, March 17 and 21, 1868

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, March 21, 1868

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, March 17 and 18, 1870

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, March 18, 1874

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, March 16 and 18, 1875

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, March 16 and 18, 1876



- <sup>23</sup> Ibid, March 18, 1886
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid, February 27, 1892
- <sup>25</sup> *Rutland Herald*, March 17, 1868
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid, May 21, 1870
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid, October 6, 1870
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid, March 13 and 18, 1871
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid, June 18, 1878
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid, November 17, 1878
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid, October 28, 1889
- <sup>32</sup> *Educational Works of the Sisters of St. Joseph*, p. 25
- <sup>33</sup> *Rutland Herald*, June 6, 1871
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid, May 31, 1875
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid, June 30, 1873
- <sup>36</sup> Ibid, June 30, 1873
- <sup>37</sup> Ibid, July 5, 1887
- <sup>38</sup> Ibid, December 30, 1889
- <sup>39</sup> Ibid, March 25 and 30, 1891
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid, August 21, 1891
- <sup>41</sup> *Vermont Sunday News*, September 19, 1965
- <sup>42</sup> P. F. Madigan, *The Life and Memoirs of Reverend Charles J. Boylan*, 1886
- <sup>43</sup> *Rutland Herald*, March 18, 1871
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid, September 4, 1871, June 5, 1871, June 30, 1873, May 31, 1875
- <sup>45</sup> *The Constitution and By-laws of the Ancient Order of Hibernians*
- <sup>46</sup> A booklet on the constitution and by-laws of the Ancient Order of Hibernians can be found among the notes on the History of St. Bridget's Parish, West Rutland.
- <sup>47</sup> *Rutland Herald*, March 20, 1875
- <sup>48</sup> Ibid, August 25 and 26, 1908
- <sup>49</sup> Ibid, October 5, 1908
- <sup>50</sup> Ibid, August 31, 1901
- <sup>51</sup> Ibid, January 2, 1909, p. 5, column 3; January 11, 1909, January 20, 1909
- <sup>52</sup> *Rutland Herald*, January 5, 1882
- <sup>53</sup> Ibid, April 11, 1882
- <sup>54</sup> Ibid, April 11, 1882
- <sup>55</sup> Ibid, May 24, 1882
- <sup>56</sup> Ibid, May 29, 1882
- <sup>57</sup> Ibid, April 11, 1882
- <sup>58</sup> Ibid, May 24, 1882
- <sup>59</sup> Ibid, April 23, 1887
- <sup>60</sup> Ibid, January 5, 1891
- <sup>61</sup> Ibid, January 6, 1891
- <sup>62</sup> Ibid, January 12, 1891
- <sup>63</sup> Ibid, June 10, 1892
- <sup>64</sup> Ibid, September 22, 1892
- <sup>65</sup> Ibid, January 21, 1893
- <sup>66</sup> Ibid, January 21, 1893 and March 12, 1891



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- <sup>67</sup> Ibid, May 12, 1891; January 6, 1893 and November 4, 1893
- <sup>68</sup> Ibid, March 4, 18 and 23, 1891
- <sup>69</sup> Ibid, April 13, 1891
- <sup>70</sup> Ibid, January 1, 1892
- <sup>71</sup> Ibid, April 14, 1891 and May 19, 1891
- <sup>72</sup> Ibid, May 19, 1891 and July 20, 1891
- <sup>73</sup> Ibid, August 19, 1891
- <sup>74</sup> Ibid, October 19 and 21, 1891
- <sup>75</sup> Ibid, November 7 and December 19, 1891
- <sup>76</sup> Ibid, January 29, 1892
- <sup>77</sup> Ibid, May 25 and June 20, 1892
- <sup>78</sup> Ibid, June 7, 16, 25; July 4 and 7, 1892
- <sup>79</sup> Ibid, September 14 and 22, 1892
- <sup>80</sup> Ibid, October 1, 21, November 3, 4, 15 and 23, 1892
- <sup>81</sup> Ibid, January 1, 1893
- <sup>82</sup> Ibid, January 6 and 21, 1893
- <sup>83</sup> Ibid, March 11 and 18, 1893
- <sup>84</sup> Ibid, April 4, 15 and 27, 1893
- <sup>85</sup> Ibid, May 31, June 22, July 15, 1893
- <sup>86</sup> Ibid, May 27, 31, June 12 and July 5, 1893
- <sup>87</sup> Ibid, August 16, 1893
- <sup>88</sup> Ibid, August 17, 1893
- <sup>89</sup> Ibid, August 22 and September 18, 1893
- <sup>90</sup> Ibid, September 18 and 26, 1893
- <sup>91</sup> Ibid, October 16 and November 4, 1893
- <sup>92</sup> Ibid, December 28 and 29, 1893
- <sup>93</sup> Ibid, June 13, 1897
- <sup>94</sup> Ibid, October 7 and November 9, 1903
- <sup>95</sup> Ibid, December 3, 9, 18 and 17, 1903
- <sup>96</sup> Ibid, February 21 and 27, 1865
- <sup>97</sup> Ibid, March 1, 1867 and October 19, 1874
- <sup>98</sup> Ibid, June 5, 1871
- <sup>99</sup> Ibid, May 28, 1883 and May 28, 1888
- <sup>100</sup> Ibid, July 2, 1888
- <sup>101</sup> Ibid, May 20 and June 1, 1891
- <sup>102</sup> *Rutland Herald*, November 16, 17 and 18, 1903
- <sup>103</sup> Ibid, November 23, 1903
- <sup>104</sup> Ibid, November 26, 1903
- <sup>105</sup> The Vermont Edition of *Our Sunday Visitor*, July 15, 1951, p. 5a
- <sup>106</sup> *Rutland Herald*, February 4, 24, 26, 28 and 29, 1908
- <sup>107</sup> Ibid, February 29, 1908 and April 16, 1908
- <sup>108</sup> Ibid, October 5, 1908
- <sup>109</sup> Ibid, January 9, 1909
- <sup>110</sup> Ibid, January 9, 1909; January 5 and 29, 1912
- <sup>111</sup> Ibid, January 16, 1909



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- <sup>112</sup> Rutland Land Records, Book 24, p. 85
- <sup>113</sup> Ibid, Book 15, p. 234
- <sup>114</sup> *Rutland Herald*, May 1, 3 and 13, 1915
- <sup>115</sup> Ibid, June 26, 1915
- <sup>116</sup> Ibid, April 25, 1916
- <sup>117</sup> Ibid, April, 1917
- <sup>118</sup> Annual Parish Reports 1916 and 1917
- <sup>119</sup> City of Rutland Records, Book 34, p. 207
- <sup>120</sup> Ibid, April 25, 1916
- <sup>121</sup> Ibid, April, 1917
- <sup>122</sup> Ibid, July 6, 1907
- <sup>123</sup> Ibid, February 20, 24 and 29, 1908
- <sup>124</sup> Ibid, May 17, 1909
- <sup>125</sup> Ibid, May 1, 2, 10, 17 and 24, 1909
- <sup>126</sup> Ibid, May 30, 1910
- <sup>127</sup> Ibid, May 8, 27, 30, 31 and June 6, 13, 20 and 27, 1918
- <sup>128</sup> Ibid, October 18, 1915
- <sup>129</sup> Ibid, October 10, 1907
- <sup>130</sup> Ibid, February 9, 13, 20 and 24, 1915
- <sup>131</sup> Ibid, April 25, 1916



### The Last Quarter of the Twentieth Century

During Father Conner's pastorate at St. Peter's, he had the unenviable task of closing St. Peter's School. During the 1971-72 school year the then Monsignor Connor announced that grades one through six would be discontinued the following year. Only grades seven and eight would be held. This decision had been reached after months of discussion with the St. Peter's School Board, the Parish Council and the parishioners. Monsignor Connor stated that the reason for the closing was primarily financial. For the past six years the parish had been operating the school at a deficit. Up until 1971 the parish had been drawing on a special reserve fund to cover this school deficit, but this year the fund was exhausted. The pastor noted that one of the largest contributing factors to the rising school costs was the drastic change in the ratio of nuns to lay teachers. In 1966 there were thirteen nuns and four lay teachers. In 1972 there were nine nuns and eight lay teachers.

Not unexpectedly, following the 1972-73 school year, Monsignor Connor had to announce that there would be no seventh and eighth grades at St. Peter's School. The parish would have to depend on a religious education program to instruct the children. The Rutland City School Department would lease the building. Religious education classes would be held in the St. Peter's School building after the regular school day classes.

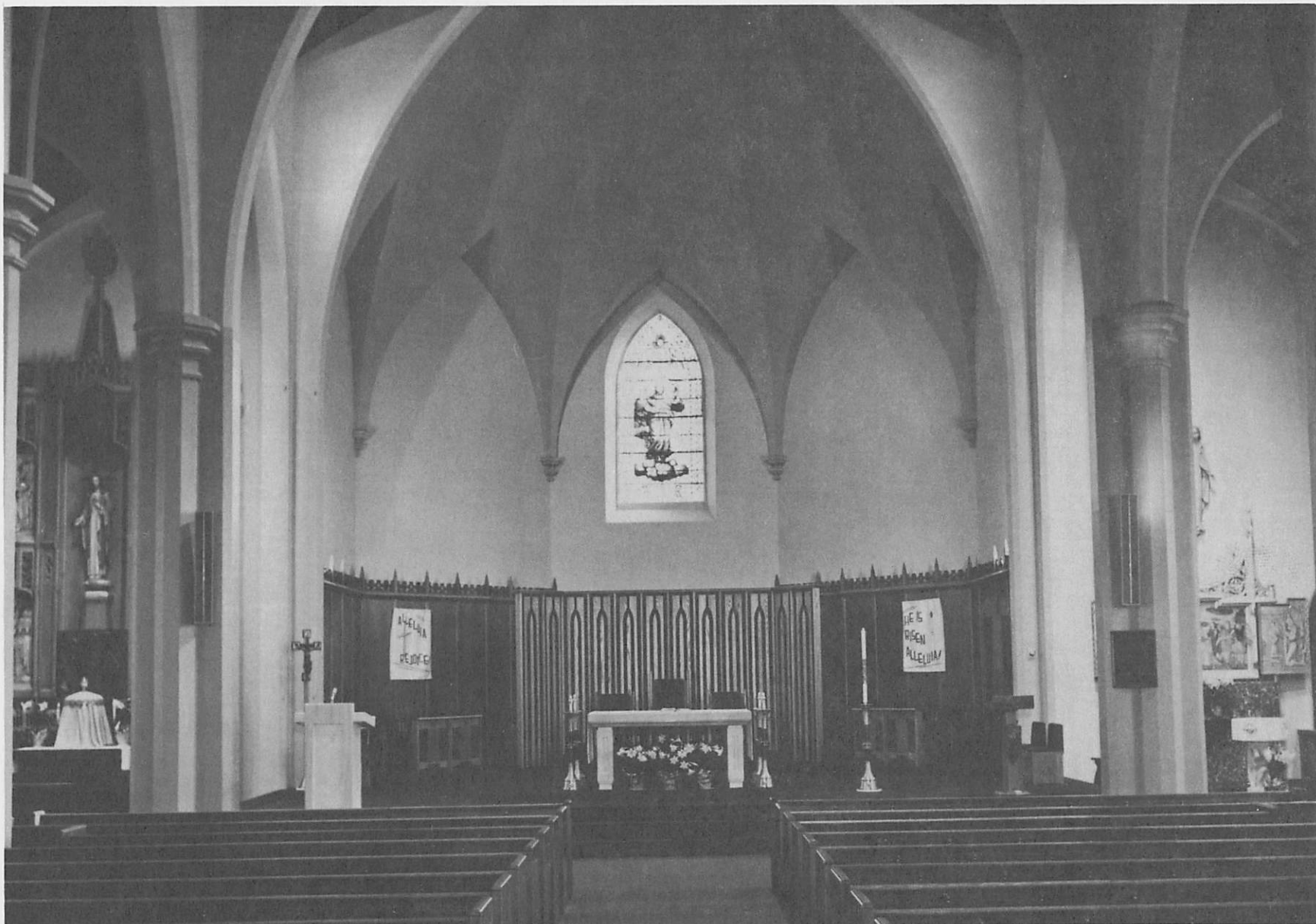
In 1973 the parish celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the dedication of the church. In addition to a program of spiritual renewal the parish constructed a new side entrance to aid the handicapped and the elderly. Edward Lyston donated money to install a new church steeple. Although not as high as the original, it certainly was an improvement from the flat top look left when the original steeple had been removed. Monsignor Connor also renovated the church interior in accordance with the liturgical norms of the Second Vatican Council. Among these changes was the installation of a flat altar, which faced the people. A new parking lot was added by filling in the lot on the west side of Meadow Street across from the rectory.

When Monsignor Connor was killed in a tragic automobile accident in 1975, it marked the end of an era. Since 1857 when Father Charles Boylan became pastor of St. Peter's Parish, pastors came to St. Peter's to serve the rest of their lives there and to die there. The exception to this pattern was Father Robert Joyce and it took consecration as a bishop to interrupt this pattern. For a pastor of St. Peter's, acceptance of the pastoral assignment was an acceptance of St. Peter's as "home" for the rest of his life.

Upon Monsignor Connor's death Bishop Marshall assigned Father Joseph A. Lively as pastor at St. Peter's. But times in the Church were changing. A priest was no longer assigned for a lifetime to a pastorate. Father Lively served at St. Peter's from 1976 to 1984.

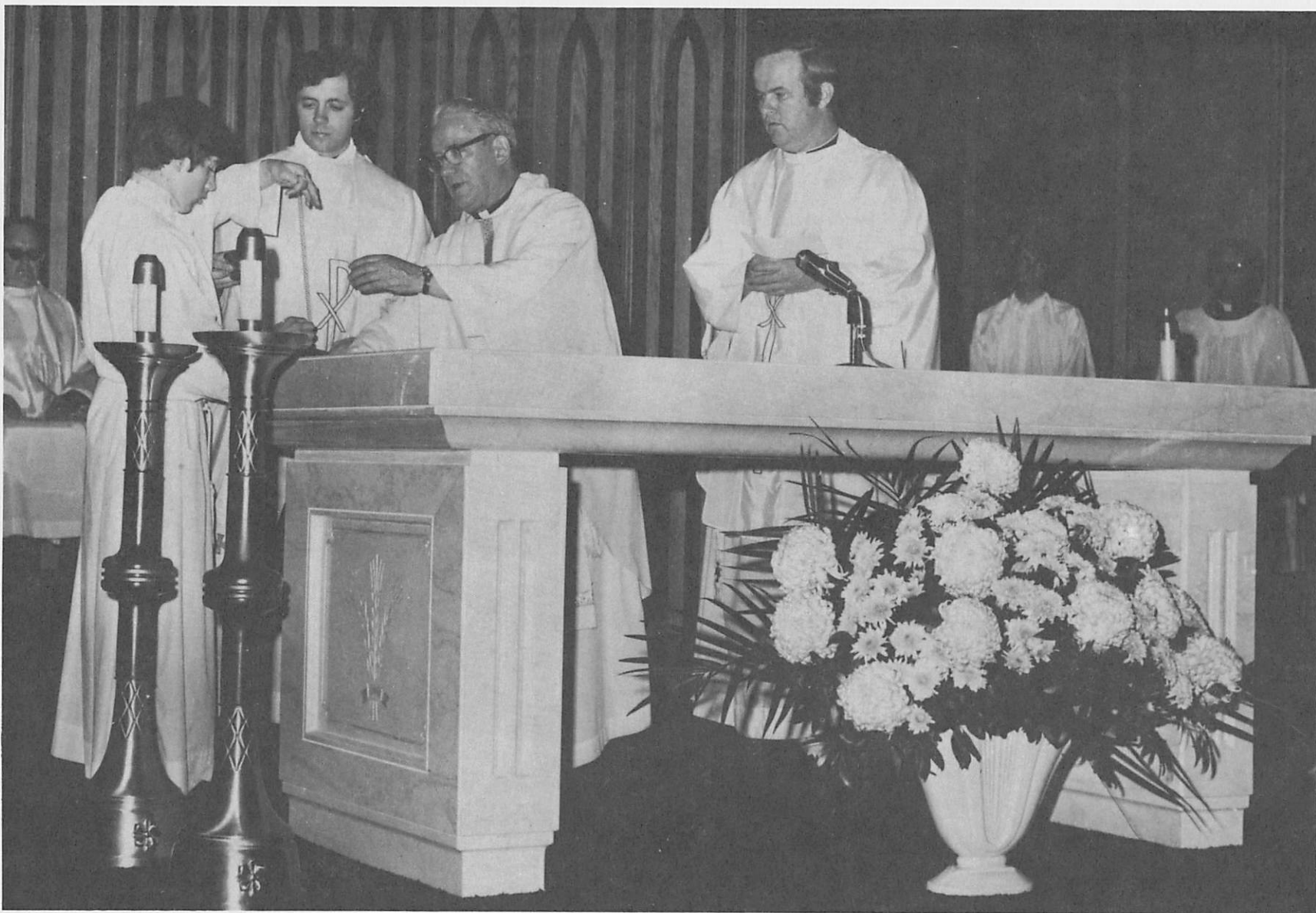
In the spring of 1978, the Rutland City School Board announced that it would not renew the lease of the St. Peter's School building. This decision had a very detrimental impact on the parish. The rent money was crucial to the parish in its attempt to support Mt. St. Joseph Academy. Further, the parish had no money for maintenance of the school building itself, or for the fuel bills, both of which were being provided by the





*In 1973 Father Connor made a number of liturgical changes to the interior of St. Peter's Church.*





*Father Connor blessed the new altar which faced the people at St. Peter's in 1973. In the picture are: (l to r) Father McDonough, an altar boy, Father Brian Mead, Father Connor, Father John McIntyre, an altar boy, and Father John O'Connell.*



city as a part of the lease. A special referendum was held in May of 1978, in which the voters of Rutland agreed to a tax increase to continue the St. Peter's School lease. In early June the Rutland City School Board announced that they would not change their position on the lease and rejected the tax increase as unnecessary. This was in spite of the fact that prior to the referendum, the Rutland City School Board stated that they would go along with the voters' mandate.

That same year Father Lively began renovations on the ground floor classrooms. By combining two classrooms he was able to build the Emmaus Room which was used as a Chapel and multi-purpose room. Daily Masses were now offered here which reduced the costs of heating the large church space. A large folding door was installed between the two other ground floor rooms to make them more versatile as meeting and dining rooms. A new kitchen was also installed thus making this portion of the old St. Peter's School into a functioning parish center. The new wing of the school was used as rental space.

It was during the pastorate of Father Lively that the term "St. Peter Church" became the official appellation of the church and parish although many parishioners still called it "St. Peter's." This change was the result of a national movement to remove the apostrophe "s" from the name of Catholic colleges, schools and churches.

Pastoral rotation also greatly affected parish life. Parishioners that had been baptized and married by the same priest had every expectation that the same priest would baptize their children. Now such a scenario was hardly probable. A large family would probably have more than one priest baptize their children let alone be the same priest that had married them. From 1857 to 1946 there had been three pastors at St. Peter's Parish. From 1946 to 1999 there have been seven pastors.

In 1984 Father Lively was transferred from St. Peter Church and replaced by Father Joseph Campbell. Father Campbell was in quite poor health and by December of 1985 he was unable to continue as pastor.

Father Raymond Giroux was assigned as pastor at St. Peter Parish in January 1986. As a hands-on priest, Father Giroux was able to enliven the parish. As a good businessman he was able to get parish finances under control. However, his health began to fail and in 1994 he was transferred from St. Peter Parish. Father Wilfred Andre Houle was the new pastor at St. Peter Parish and brought with him the health and youth that several of the recent pastors did not have. His approach to parish life was to stimulate parish members to take more responsibility for their own parish.

In 1998 the parish began a 15-month celebration of the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the dedication of the present St. Peter Church. A series of spiritual and community-building activities were developed by the committee with the ultimate goal of parish renewal in an age of change. Efforts were made to adapt the best of the parish tradition to the next century, to build a reinvigorated community, and to build a new sense of ownership in the parish. In November 1999 a major fund drive with a goal of \$800,000 was launched to provide for necessary repairs to the church building.

As the parish enters a new millennium, change will inevitably occur. But that change can, and should, build upon the tradition and rich heritage of faith, hope and love that has made it "home" for so many people for so many years. – *Ad multos annos.* [To many more years].





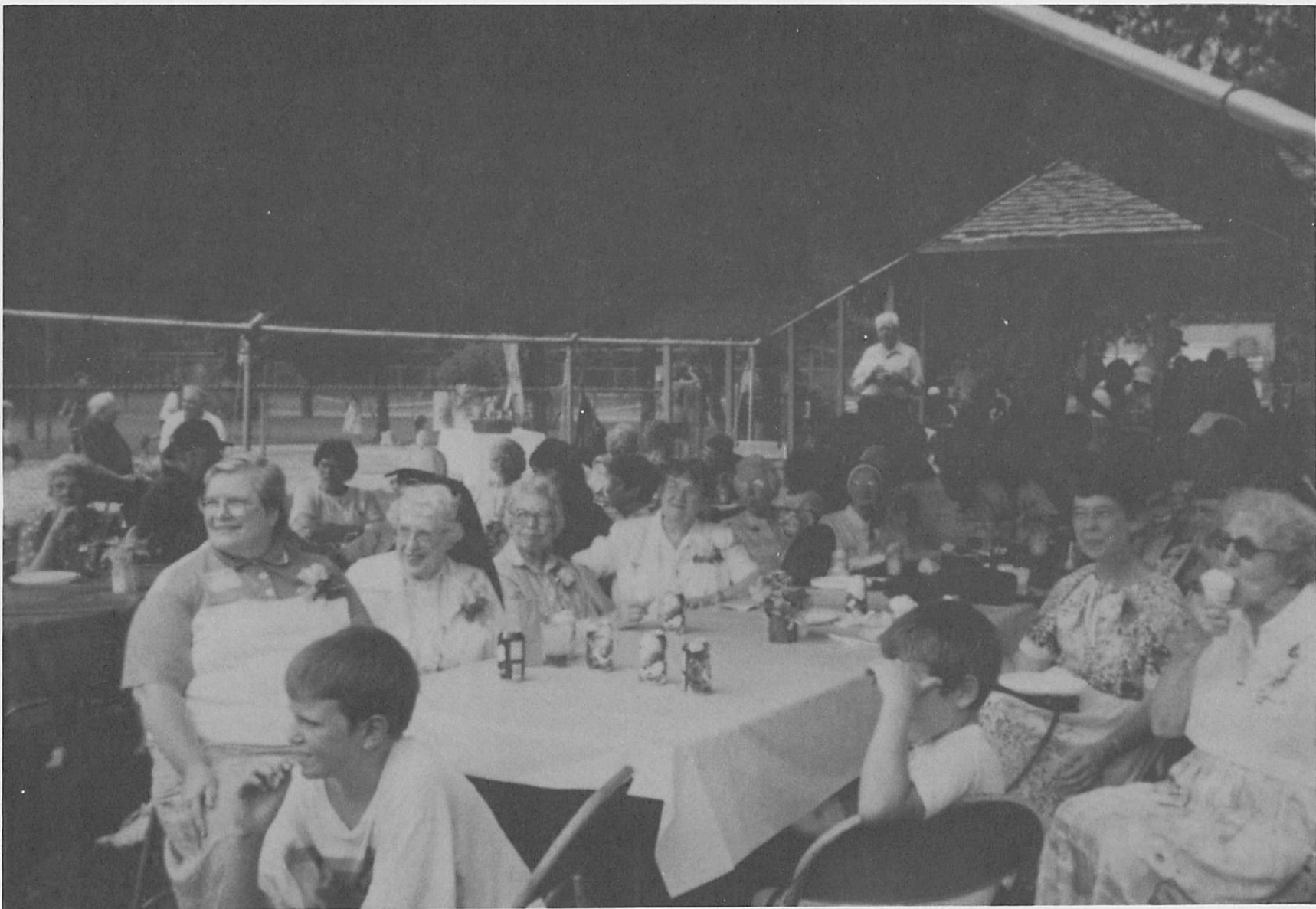
*From June 1998 to November 1999 St. Peter Church celebrated the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the dedication of the church building in 1873. Note that the three windows in the front of the church are again open to the interior of the church. A new, and additional, set of organ pipes was installed in the front of the church. They were a gift of the Organ Institute of the Holy Family Parish which was secured by then parish organist Dr. Charles Callahan.*





*The Assumption Festival was recently restored after a hiatus of numerous years. It has now returned to the parish tradition.*





*The parish picnic on the Feast of the Assumption weekend in 1998 was one of many special events during the anniversary celebration. This picnic has become an annual parish tradition.*





DONNA BUTLOCK

*The cross from the original steeple of St. Peter's Church had been saved when the steeple was removed. It was restored and mounted on the southeast corner of Convent Avenue and Meadow Street. In 1998 Father W. Andre Houle blessed it in its new location which is now a landmark.*



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